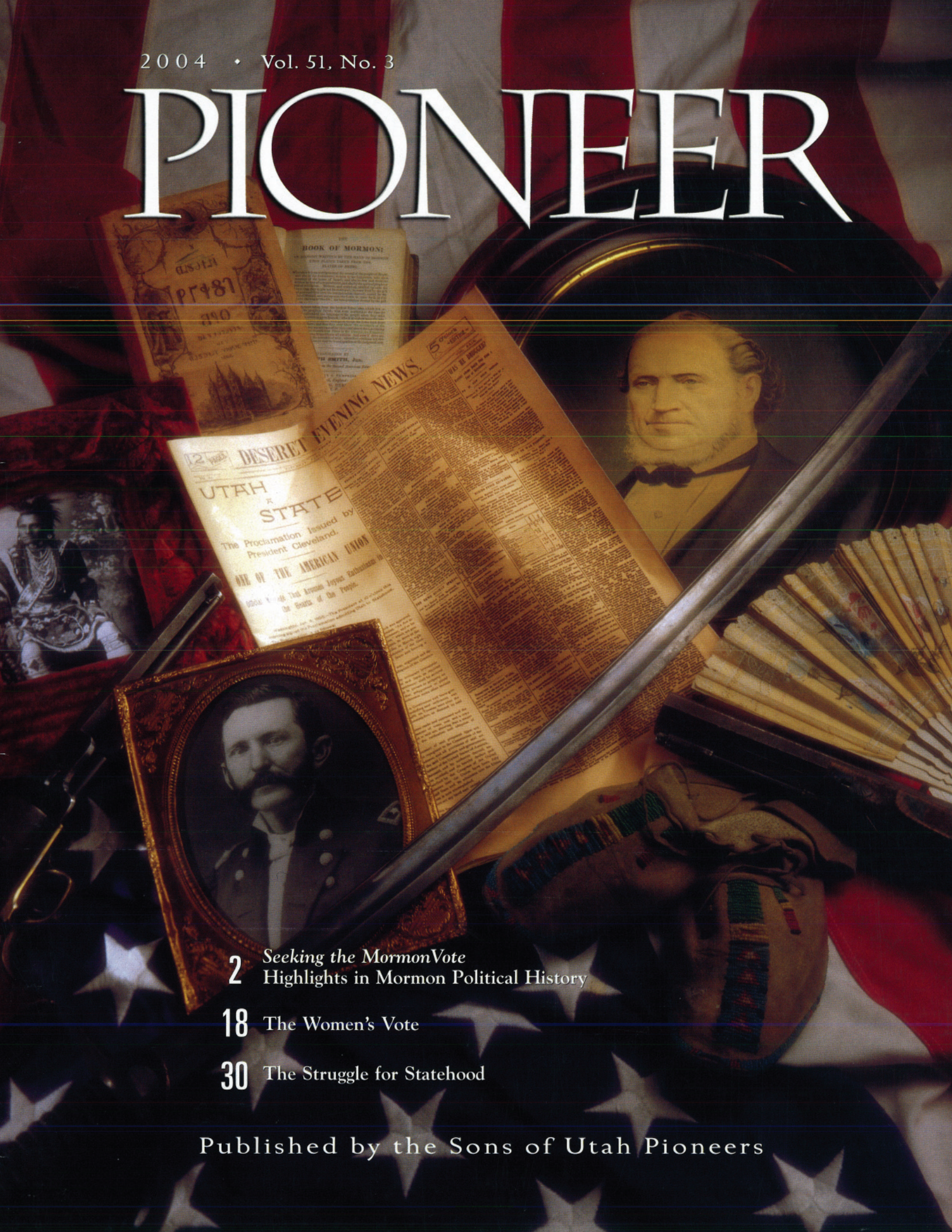


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PIONEER



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Highlights in Mormon Political History

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Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers

PIONEER

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The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers honors early and modern-day pioneers, both young and older, for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work, service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination. Pioneer Magazine supports the mission of the Society.

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President's Message

By Kent V. Lott

Politics in Early Utah

The story of how politics evolved in early Utah centers around the quest for statehood and the practice of polygamy. The first attempt for statehood was in 1849–1850 and there were several thereafter. Statehood was not achieved until January 4, 1896, some forty-six years after that first attempt.

Throughout those years, pressure was put on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to discontinue the practice of polygamy, and admission to the Union as a state became contingent upon this. This condition resulted in the formation of two major parties, the Liberal Party, which was anti-Mormon, and the Mormon People's Party. There were attempts in Congress at one point to deny the vote to all Mormons including those who were to involved in the practice of polygamy.

When the Manifesto was issued in 1890, which stated the intent of the Church to discontinue the practice of polygamy, events moved rapidly towards statehood for Utah. However, one major obstacle to Utah's admission remained, and that was the tendency of the Mormons to vote as a bloc. The advice from both major national political parties, the Democrats and Republicans, was that statehood would not be approved until the orientation of political parties was brought in line with the national party situation.

The People's Party was disbanded and the Church actively encouraged its membership to join one of the two major national political parties. These actions included efforts to have Church members divided into two approximately equal halves, some for the Republicans and the others for the Democrats.

My grandmother, who was born and raised in Grantsville, Utah, almost certainly participated in these events, along with her parents and other relatives and friends. I do not know the particulars of how she became a member of one of the political parties. I regret not having questioned her about her experiences in that period of time, what procedures the Church used to bring about the division, and how she wound up in her particular party.

I do remember that she was very interested in the political scene and was an avid supporter of her party. Later on, when some of her children chose to become members of the other party, she did not appreciate the decision they had made.

I remember as a child going to family reunions and listening to long and intense discussions amongst my relatives about the distinct merits of the policies and practices of the Republicans and the Democrats, with my grandmother as an active participant. These discussions were friendly and good natured and did not result in hurt feelings or a decrease in

family harmony, but were certainly interesting to listen to.

The personal aspects of these events and how they impacted families and individuals would certainly be interesting material for further investigation. It also points to the importance of doing whatever we can to preserve these memories and histories and gives us pause to regret the lost opportunities for doing this. One of the important goals of the Sons of Utah Pioneers is to actively encourage such investigation and preservation of important memories and histories. We hope that each of us will become more active and involved in doing so. ▣

Grandparents Frank Lucius Clark and Teresa Belle Anderson pictured below on their wedding day, 2 Feb. 1898.



Seeking the Mormon

Excerpts taken from the CHARLES E. MERRILL MONOGRAPH SERIES IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

HIGHLIGHTS IN MORMON POLITICAL HISTORY

By J. Keith Melville

Associate Professor of Political Science, Brigham Young University

Politics had been a factor in the troubles of the Mormons in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. In the latter state, the Mormons were recognized as a potentially powerful political force, and their vote was sought by both political parties. Using this political leverage, the Saints were able to extract a liberal charter for their city of Nauvoo, with a significant degree of local autonomy. Joseph Smith, president of the Church, consciously attempted to procure political protection for his “peculiar people.” This ultimately backfired, however, and resulted in the death of Smith and the expulsion of the Mormons from Illinois.

Pottawattamie Politics: The Mormons in the Frontier Politics of Iowa

The exodus of the Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Rocky Mountains was temporarily halted at the Missouri River. These religious outcasts had been forced to leave their prosperous city on the Mississippi River beginning in February of 1846 before they were adequately prepared for travel: the trek across southern Iowa during the winter and spring was most difficult.

[The Saints were granted permission from the federal government to camp temporarily in the Pottawatomie lands in western Iowa.] A bustling frontier community emerged on the Omaha lands on the west side of the Missouri River called Winter Quarters, which was the principal temporary settlement of the Mormons. [Here] the people were governed by the ec-

clesiastical authorities—generally by the Twelve Apostles and the Council of Fifty and locally by the High Council and bishops.

At a conference held on December 25, 1847, “the congregation voted that the High Council on the east side of the river have all municipal power given to them by this people, and that the Bishop’s courts have authority as civil magistrates among the people, until the laws of Iowa are extended over us.”¹

The Church assumed functions characteristic of the state, enacting and executing laws, bringing violators to justice in the ecclesiastical courts, appointing the needed officers, and pragmatically meeting the civic needs of the people.

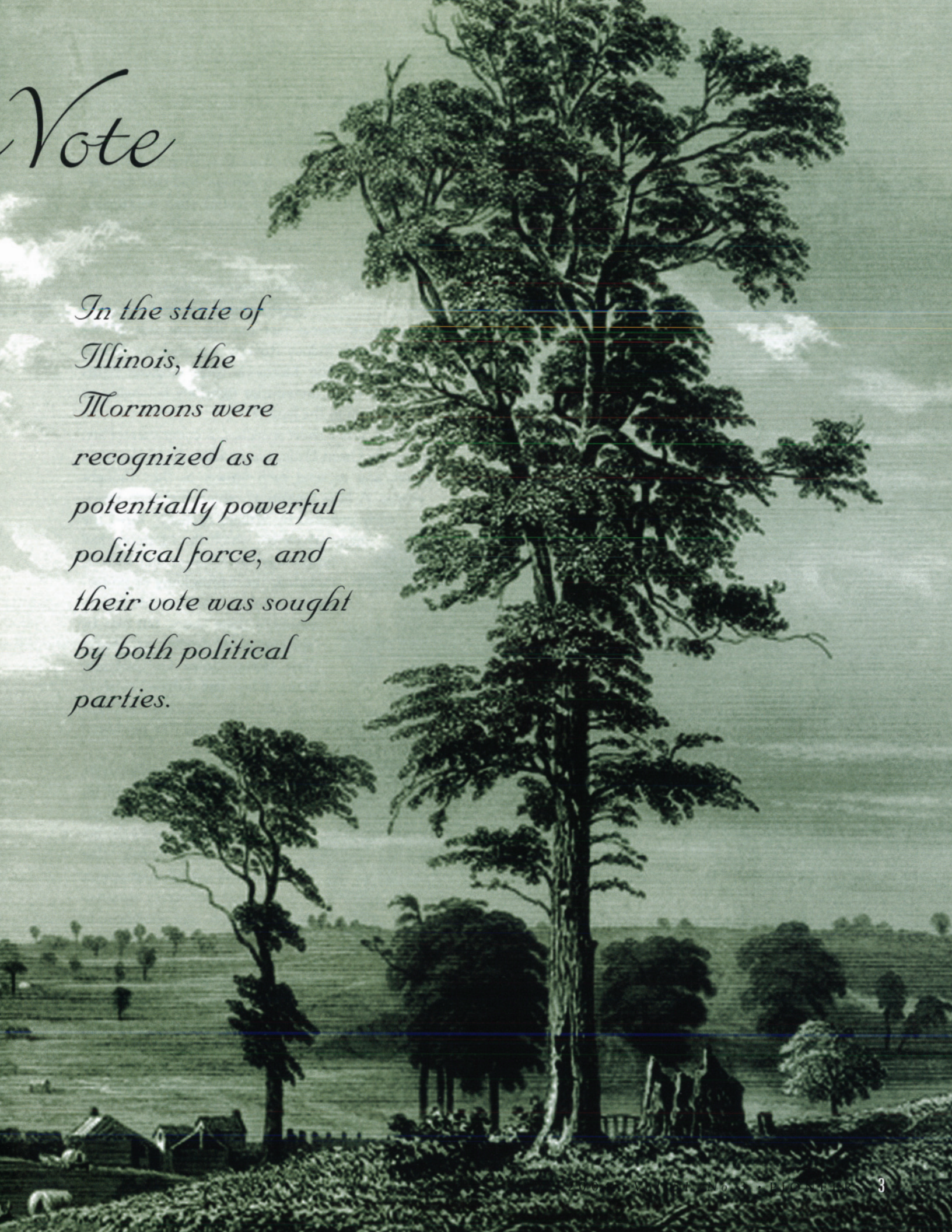
Mormon Vote Solicited

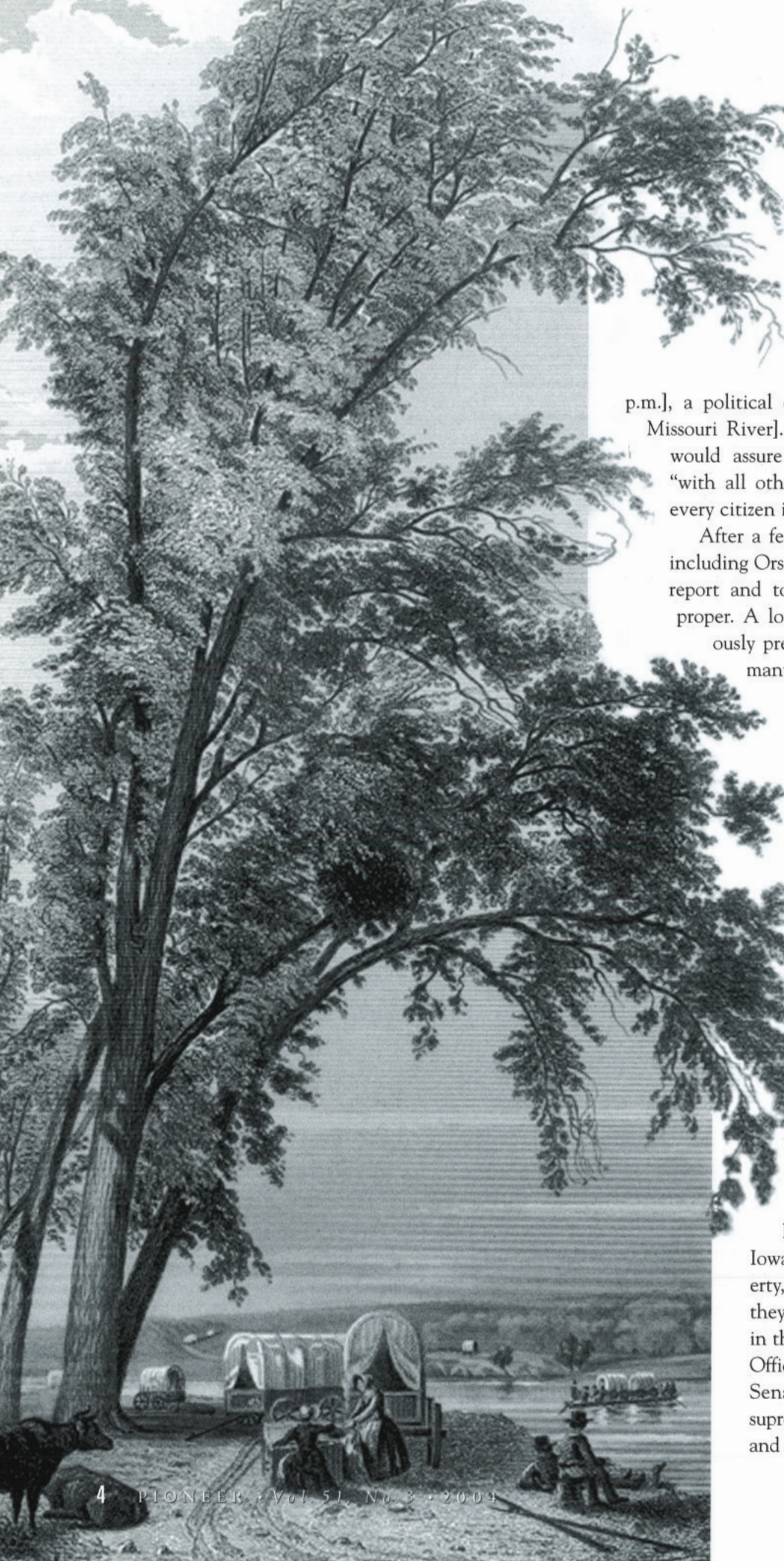
It appears that both political parties in Iowa were nearly evenly divided and each solicitous about the welfare of the Mormons, whose votes they wanted at the next August election. The Whig Party also considered the desirability of the Mormon vote and [following a political caucus held in Iowa City, on February 29] a stirring appeal for the Mormon vote was sent to Brigham Young on March 18, 1848.

With obvious intent of appealing to the emotions and thus gaining Mormon support in the next election, a long catalog of injustices which had been experienced by the Mormons in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois was mentioned the blame laid “to the party who assume the name of democracy, who wear the borrowed garments of the earlier fathers of the

Note

In the state of Illinois, the Mormons were recognized as a potentially powerful political force, and their vote was sought by both political parties.





Republic....”² [The Mormons] were promised aid in settling in their new “City of Refuge” and that the “demands of justice shall be satisfied and the oppression of the strong man be stayed.”³

Mormon Political Caucus

[On March 27, 1848, at 12:40 p.m.], a political caucus met [on the east side of the Missouri River]. Sidney Roberts said that the Whigs would assure the Mormons their religious rights “with all other immunities rightfully belonging to every citizen in the land.”⁴

After a few short speeches, a committee of six, including Orson Hyde, was appointed to make out a report and to send such answer as they thought proper. A long resolution, which had been previously prepared by Willard Richards, listed the many grievances which the Mormons had experienced in Missouri and Illinois, including the withholding of protection not only by the Democratic governors of these states, but also by such national leaders as Martin Van Buren, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, and others, most of whom were leaders in the Democratic Party. The resolution included:

“Therefore: in consideration, that the Whigs of Iowa will lift their hands toward heaven, and swear by the Eternal Gods, before the Holy Angels, that they will use all their powers to suppress mobocracy, insurrection, rebellion and violence, in whatever form or from whatever source they may arise against the Latter-day Saints, and the citizens of Iowa, even to the sacrifice of all their property, and their lives if need be, and that they will give to the Saints their full share in the choice of county, District, and State Officers, viz.: Two Representatives and one Senator in the State Legislature, one supreme judge in the State of Iowa, etc., and that they will stand by and support our

representatives and senator and all our officers in happiness, and general and particular welfare of the citizens of Iowa: and that they will furnish all means necessary for the printing and publishing of the subject matter before us: . . . that we unite our votes with the Whigs of Iowa at the elections of the current year. . . ."⁵

Reflecting on these developments, Brigham Young recorded in his history that "although to us it looked rather suspicious, that the Whigs of Iowa should at this peculiar juncture become deeply interested in our welfare, and all of a sudden grow warm and eloquent upon the subject of our expulsion from Missouri, and the martyrdom of our Prophet and Patriarch, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and the unparalleled suffering we had endured in our boasted land of freedom; still the caucus concluded to reply to the communications of the Whigs [and] unite their votes with the Whigs of Iowa at the elections of the current year. . . ."⁶

Prior to the election a number of influential Democratic Party members visited the Kanesville Precinct. "His business," reported George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson, the two Apostles in Iowa, to Brigham Young, "was . . . to electioneer for the Democrats: to write tickets for the ignorant Mormons to vote; and to see if Mormon and White Women were alike."⁷

"The 7th of August came; the election was held at the Tabernacle; much union of feeling was manifested by the brethren and all was peace and quietude through the entire day; 523 votes were cast at the Kanesville Precinct. There were 7 full Democratic tickets, 25 scattering or mongrel tickets and 491 full Whig tickets, giving Dan Miller 459 majority over Thompson in this precinct."⁸ James Sloan and William Pickett attempted to deliver the votes to the clerk of Monroe County, but by this time the Democrats were aware of the solid vote against them, and the clerk refused to accept the votes. Changing his tactics, he accepted them, but then claimed subsequently that they had been stolen.

Irate over the developments, the *Davenport Gazette* of August 24 reported: "It appears that the Mormons cast their votes for the Whig ticket, thus electing Miller to Congress and the Whig State Ticket, but before the votes were all counted, the *Ballot boxes were stolen*. What remedy will be found for this unparalleled outrage, if the above be true, we know not, but if the Governor be not as dishonest as the men who stole the ballot boxes he will

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and exodus, as set in
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immediately order another election."⁹

The Democratic papers parried the charges regarding the stolen poll books with countercharges. They argued that the Mormons were [only transients] en route to the Rocky Mountains and that they were not legally entitled to vote in the Iowa elections. Another claim . . . was that this body of "deluded fanatics" was attempting to control the destinies of Iowa. This controversy became highly emotional; some papers advocated radical action.

The *Iowa Sentinel* [of September 8] also referred to the Mormons as deluded fanatics, unpatriotic citizens, thieves, and "pests to society," urging: "The sooner they are disposed of the better it will be for the people, and the less will be the expense for the state. . . ."¹⁰

The Mormon participation in the August election provoked four major [areas of] conflict: a paper war between the Whig and Democratic newspapers in Iowa, an in-Church fight involving Orson Hyde and Almon W. Babbitt, a partisan contest in the state legislature over the proposal to abolish Pottawattamie County, and a bitter contest in Congress over the seat for the First Congressional District of Iowa.

The Mormons could feel the tense situation approaching mob action. George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson, who were preparing to go to Salt Lake Valley the following spring, sent a letter to Orson Pratt in England registering this feeling: "It is our wish to leave Pottawattamie County for the mountains in the spring with our families, as we do not feel ourselves safe in our present condition, within the jurisdiction of mob laws, and mob officers to rule us; and as soon as we get our families situated in the great basin, we shall hold ourselves ready to come here or where council may direct for the building of Zion."¹¹

[By 1852], an insistent letter from Brigham Young demanded that all of the Iowa Saints, who could be properly so called, migrate to the center of Mormondom in 1852.¹² Orson Hyde rallied nearly all of the remaining Mormons in that area and left for the Valley in the late spring of 1852. What once had been a bustling Mormon community on the Iowa frontier was left nearly deserted, to be gradually filled up once again by other settlers. The pattern of expulsion and exodus, as set in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, was repeated in Iowa; but in the last-named state the violence was less severe, and the cause of conflict—politics—was more distinct and clear.

Theocracy in the Great Basin

The Mormon migration to the West was not typical of the American westward movement in other ways. The latter was basically individualistic, the former was the migration of an existing and integrated society. The governmental needs of the Mormons, therefore, were immediate.

Among the Mormon store of religious beliefs was a political system called the Kingdom of God. It was to be an earthly kingdom with all of the political trappings of existing political systems. Suggestive of this was the interesting organization known as the Council of Fifty, which was established as the legislature of the Kingdom. The political system would, when fully organized, be based on the principles of constitutional monarchy, the rule of law, separation of powers, and federalism. Although a kingdom, its institutional features seemed to resemble the governmental system of the United States.¹³

Self-government was not new to the Saints.

Since 1845, they had had the responsibilities of handling their own political needs which they had accomplished through a theocratic system. There is little question that during this theocratic period the Council of Fifty functioned in a legislative capacity, determining political policy. Administrative offices, police and military organizations, courts and other governmental positions were filled as needed, by and large, from the already-existing church organization.

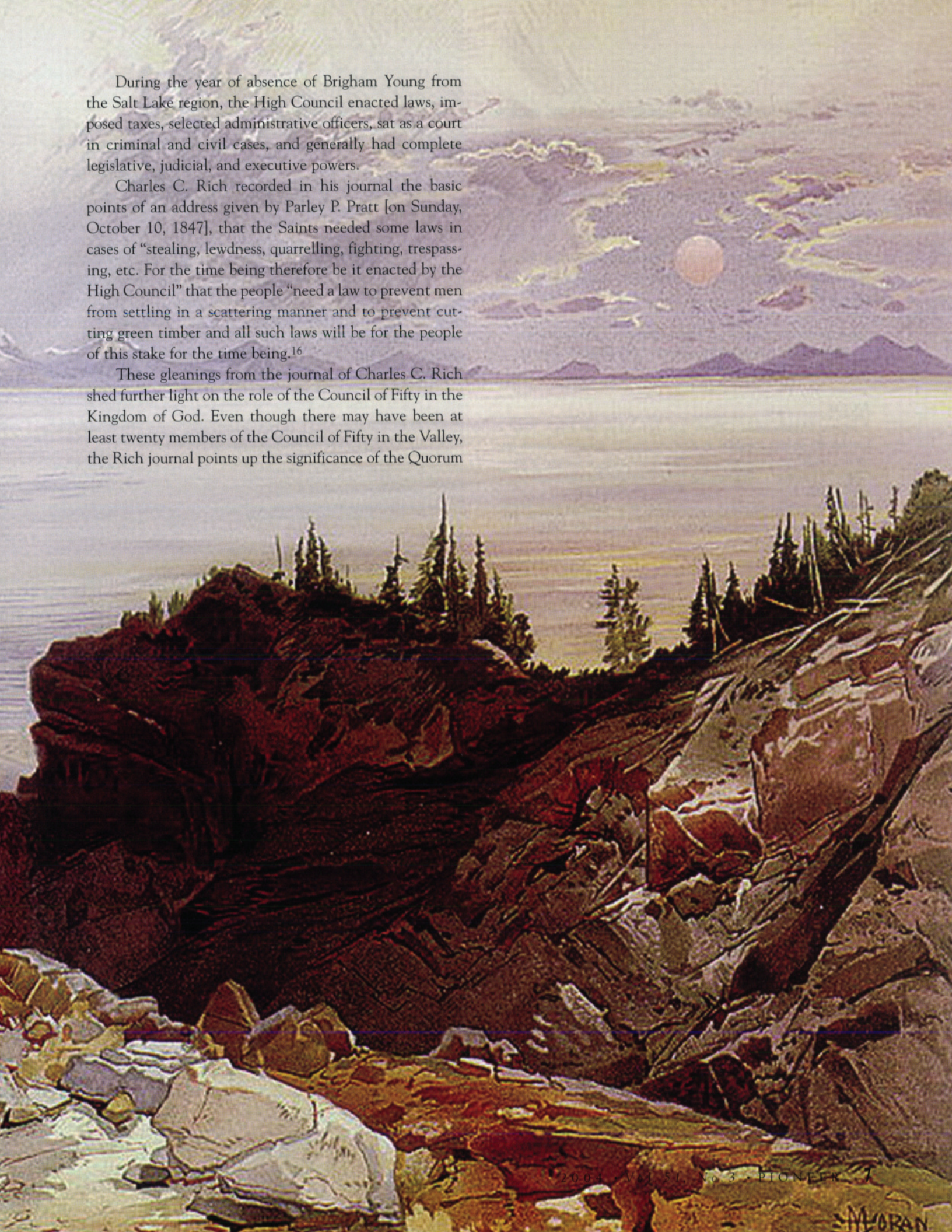
The records adequately demonstrate that when the pioneers arrived in the Valley, all activities were sponsored by the Church. Brigham Young proclaimed the first "land law" of Utah on July 25, and subsequent proclamations "announced there would be no private ownership in the water streams; that wood and timber would be regarded as community property."¹⁴

In August of 1847, Brigham Young and certain other pioneer leaders prepared to return to Winter Quarters. Before doing so, they organized the Salt Lake Stake of Zion. John Smith was selected to be the president, and other leading men were nominated to the presidency and High Council. The selection of this governing body was approved by a vote of the Saints in the October conference.¹⁵

During the year of absence of Brigham Young from the Salt Lake region, the High Council enacted laws, imposed taxes, selected administrative officers, sat as a court in criminal and civil cases, and generally had complete legislative, judicial, and executive powers.

Charles C. Rich recorded in his journal the basic points of an address given by Parley P. Pratt [on Sunday, October 10, 1847], that the Saints needed some laws in cases of "stealing, lewdness, quarrelling, fighting, trespassing, etc. For the time being therefore be it enacted by the High Council" that the people "need a law to prevent men from settling in a scattering manner and to prevent cutting green timber and all such laws will be for the people of this stake for the time being."¹⁶

These gleanings from the journal of Charles C. Rich shed further light on the role of the Council of Fifty in the Kingdom of God. Even though there may have been at least twenty members of the Council of Fifty in the Valley, the Rich journal points up the significance of the Quorum



the PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

of the Twelve Apostles in the "greater council" and emphasizes the teaching of Joseph Smith that the priesthood is a "perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people. . . ."¹⁷

The intent of the Mormons was to establish a territorial or state government within the federal system of the United States, and that the organization of the State of Deseret and the petitioning the United States for admittance as either a state or a territory corroborates their intent.¹⁸ ■

Excerpts taken from Dr. J. Keith Melville, Highlights in Mormon Political History (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1967), 1-44.

Notes

1 *Journal History of the Church*, Ms, November 14, 1847. This manuscript history compiled by Andrew Jensen, assistant church historian, under the direction of the church historian, is located in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City and hereafter will be cited as JH.

2 *Whig State Executive Committee to the Rev. Brigham Young and Council of the Twelve of Latter-day Saints*, March 18, 1848.

3 *Ibid.*

4 JH, March 27, 1848.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, Ms, 1848, 24, as found in JH, March 27, 1848.

7 JH, October 2, 1848.

8 Evan M. Green to his uncle Brigham Young, October 7; JH, October 7, 1848. Miller, a Whig, and Thompson, a Democrat, were contestants for the House seat from the First Congressional District of Iowa.

9 *Iowa Sentinel*, August 18, 1848, as found in "Newsclippings from Iowa and Illinois: 1841-1849." Typescript in Special Collections of the Brigham Young University Harold B. Lee Library, 202-3.

10 *Ibid.*, 224-37.

11 JH, December 20, 1848.

12 JH, September 21, 1851.

13 See the author's "Brigham Young's Ideal Society: The Kingdom of God," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 5, no. 1 (Autumn, 1962): 3-18.

14 B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Century 1*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:269.

15 JH, October 4, 1847.

16 *Journal of Charles C. Rich*, located in the Church Historian's Office.

17 Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1940), 322.

18 Roberts, CHC, 3:414-47.

Entrance to Kanesville #003, (2-3) and Council Bluffs Ferry & group of Cottonwood trees #009, (4) courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, HBL Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT. The Great Salt Lake of Utah by Thomas Moran, #LC-USZC4-3004, courtesy Library of Congress, (6-7). Great Salt Lake City in 1853 by Frederick Piercy, courtesy Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (8-9).

Although the stake presidency and high council functioned as the highest governmental units in Utah until late 1848, two members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles and the Council of Fifty, Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor, came into the Valley in October 1847 and were regarded as the highest authorities there. Shortly after his arrival, Pratt reminded the stake high council that its laws were only temporary—that permanent arrangements would be in the hands of the Council of Fifty as soon as its members were present.¹

The Saints, in seeking a sanctuary and self-government, found themselves situated on the crossroads of an expanding nation and under its jurisdiction. Already aware that gold had been discovered in California, the leaders of this politico-religious community realistically concluded that there would be an ever-increasing contact with people not of their faith and that the theocratic government would be unacceptable to the nonbeliever.²

For nearly two years church leaders handled all civil responsibilities; then in March 1849, when the federal government



still had not made any move to provide the Saints with any form of government, the leaders took it upon themselves to form a provisional government. In February they sent out a notice:

"... to all the citizens of that portion of Upper California lying east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, that a convention will be held at Great Salt Lake in said Territory, on Monday the fifth day of March next, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of organizing a territorial or state government."

This—March 5—was the day that General Zachary Taylor succeeded James K. Polk as president of the United States.³

When the citizens of the Great Basin gathered in convention on that day, they elected Daniel Spencer, president of the Salt Lake Stake, to be convention chairman. William Clayton was elected secretary; Thomas Bullock, assistant secretary; and Horace S. Eldridge as marshal. A committee was commissioned to draft a constitution under which the people might organize and govern themselves: "Until the Congress of the United States shall otherwise provide for the Government of the Territory, hereinafter named and described, by admitting us into the Union, WE, THE PEOPLE, Grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of those blessings, do ordain and establish a free and Independent Government by the name of the STATE OF DESERET. . . ."⁴

The [proposed State of Deseret] boundaries were ambitious to say the least, comprising all of the present states of Utah and Nevada; most of Arizona; much of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico; approximately a third of California from the boundary of Mexico north along the coast to 118 degrees 30' west longitude; and small sections of Idaho and Oregon.⁵

[The preamble made it] clear that the people intended they should always be identified with the government of the United States.

The committee consisted of ten members, four of whom were Apostles and the rest prominent men in the Church. The work of the convention continued until March 10, when the Constitution of the State of Deseret was unanimously adopted. Two days later, March 12, it was unanimously ratified by the people who were assembled in the bowery, and the officers for the State of Deseret were elected; 674 votes were counted in favor of the following ticket:

Brigham Young, governor
Willard Richards, secretary of state
Newel K. Whitney, treasurer
Heber C. Kimball, chief justice
John Taylor and Newel K. Whitney, associate justices
Daniel H. Wells, attorney general
Horace S. Eldridge, marshal
Albert Carrington, assessor and collector
Joseph L. Heywood, surveyor of highways



These officers were elected in the same manner as those under the theo-democratic government: a group of church leaders was selected by the high council to choose the best man for each position, and they selected only one list of nominees. This list was submitted to the people without any campaigning.⁶

By including a section of the coastline of California, the Saints would have the seaport of San Diego, giving them an outlet to the sea and a port through which immigrants coming by the way of the Isthmus of Panama could take a southern route into the interior of the country in weather that would permit year-round migration.

The official name of the state was to be *Deseret*, a word from the Book of Mormon, meaning honeybee (Ether 2:3). It was meant to be a symbol of thrift and industry.⁷

The constitution followed in principle the pattern of other state constitutions in the United States and divided the government into the three different branches: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. The executive power was vested in the governor, the lieutenant governor, the secretary of state, the auditor, and the treasurer, each holding office for four years. The legislative branch was divided into a senate and a house of representatives, whose members were to be elected by the people for four years. The judicial branch of government was vested in a supreme court, which was to consist of a chief justice and two associate justices to be elected by the people. No qualifications of legal training were set up for those who were to serve on the supreme court.

A state militia was provided in which all able-bodied white male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were to serve. At its first session, the assembly was to provide for a census of all white inhabitants in the state. The constitution also provided that each member of the assembly (senator or representative) was to take an oath to support the federal constitution as well as that of the State of Deseret. The right of trial by jury was held inviolate by the constitution. Orson F. Whitney states that "all officers . . . served without pay." An unusually strong section guaranteeing perfect toleration of religion was another feature of the constitution. This is a note of unusual interest because of the many accusations of intolerance that had been charged against the people.⁸

Deseret in Action

Although Utah Territory was formed September 9, 1850, the State of Deseret had been functioning since March 1849 and it continued to do so until early 1851, when the territorial administration gradually

took over. Brigham Young served as Deseret's governor, and prominent churchmen held most of the elective and appointive posts. A significant record of accomplishments was compiled by officials of the State of Deseret during these two years of quasi-official government.

To provide local government for the rapidly expanding colonies, seven counties were organized and their boundaries were prescribed by the General Assembly; they were Salt Lake, Weber, Davis, Tooele, Utah, Sanpete, and Iron. Great Salt Lake City, Ogden, Provo, Manti, and Parowan were incorporated as cities and were chartered early in 1851. At this time the counties had no governing officials but merely served as legislative and later as judicial districts. In the colonizing ventures the church leaders appointed men to preside until cities were chartered and elections were held. In Great Salt Lake City, for example, the charter was granted and the first officers were appointed by the governor and the legislature. The first regular election was held in April 1851, and all of the appointed officers retained their positions with the exception of two councilmen. The city was divided into municipal wards according to the number of aldermen; the tax rate for the city was fixed; and other necessary officers such as treasurer, marshal, and assessor were appointed. A similar procedure was followed in the other incorporated cities of Deseret.

Among the more important services rendered by the State of Deseret were those related to the judiciary. Just as the state government superseded that of the Church, so did the civil courts replace the stake high council and the bishop's courts of the theo-democracy. The latter courts had been adequate for the first years of the small isolated settlements, but with the coming of California's gold rush, many legal disputes developed that the church courts were incapable of resolving. These courts could render fair decisions, but in cases involving Mormons and non-Mormons they were almost certain to be accused of partiality, if the non-Mormon were the loser in the case. This problem was not entirely solved by the establishment of civil courts, because the chief justice and associate justices of Deseret were all church leaders and most of the magistrates of the lower courts were still ward bishops. Despite some claims of prejudice and unfairness, however, the courts rendered an important service to both settlers and transients in the region. Captain Howard Stansbury, who was surveying in the Salt Lake Valley in 1849, reported favorably on Mormon justice:

"Their courts were constantly appealed to by companies of passing emigrants, who, having fallen out by the way, could not agree on the division of their property. The

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decisions were remarkable for their fairness and impartiality and if not submitted to, were sternly enforced by the whole power of the community.”

John W. Gunnison, one of Stanbury’s associates and a military surveyor in Utah in 1853, expressed similar sentiments. With reference to another problem involving transients, Gunnison noted that the value of crops was “so enormously greater than in the states” that the remuneration demanded for damage done by trespassing emigrant livestock “looked to the stranger as an imposition and an injustice,” even though it reflected market conditions.

One of the most significant enactments of the State of Deseret was the February 28, 1850, chartering of the University of Deseret, which eventually became the University of Utah. Another law provided for an organized militia based on the Nauvoo Legion, which had maintained its existence during the years of migration and early settlement. The General Assembly also authorized Governor Young to contribute a block of Utah’s best marble to the Washington Monument, then being erected. The stone sent by the people of Deseret became part of the monolith in the nation’s capital, along with blocks from the various states and territories and from Sunday Schools, fire companies, and temperance societies.

Other important enactments included the incorporation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the incorporation of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, the regulation of the manufacture and sale of spiritous liquors, and several enactments for the control and conservation of the region’s natural resources.⁹ ■

Notes

1 Richard D. Poll, ed., Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller, assoc. eds., *Utah’s History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 156.

2 J. Keith Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1967), 45.

3 Russell R. Rich, *Ensign to the Nations* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1972), 181.

4 *Acts, Resolutions and Memorials Passed at the Several Annual Sessions of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah* (Great Salt Lake City: Joseph Cain, Public Printer, 1855), 45.

5 Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 51–53.

6 Rich, *Ensign to the Nations*, 182.

7 *Ibid.*, 183.

8 *Ibid.*, 185.

9 Poll, *Utah’s History*, 158–59.

seeking TERRITORY or STATEHOOD ?

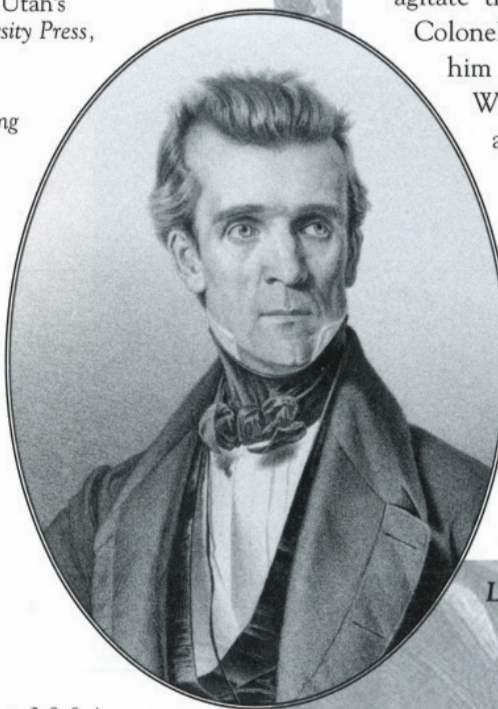
On December 9, 1848, the Council of Fifty met at Heber C. Kimball’s house to determine what type of secular government should be established. The Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty had transferred the Utah region to the United States from Mexico, creating the option of statehood or territorial government. The council decided to apply for a “Territorial government of our own,” implying that officers be chosen from Mormon leadership. A petition stating the proposal was drawn up, and Dr. John M. Bernhisel carried it to Washington, D.C., leaving Utah on May 3, 1849. The document bore 2,270 signatures, including Brigham Young’s.¹

[When] the General Assembly of the new government met in July 1849, [they] selected Almon W. Babbitt to carry its petition for statehood to Washington. Since Bernhisel was already on his way with the territorial petition, it appeared that some difficulty might develop.²

Earlier still, Brigham Young had asked Colonel Thomas L. Kane, in a letter dated February 9, 1848, to draft a petition for territorial government and “agitate the subject in the halls of Congress.”³

Colonel Kane pursued the action requested of him and reported to John M. Bernhisel and Wilford Woodruff the results of his work in an interview on November 26, 1849, in Philadelphia:

“I applied, according to the wish of President Young, for a Territorial government. I had my last sad and painful interview with President Polk. I found he did not feel disposed to favor your people, and he had his men of his own stamp picked out, to serve as governor and other officers, who would have oppressed you or



Left oval: U.S. President James K. Polk

injured you in any way to fill their own pockets. He would not appoint men from among yourselves, and I saw it absolutely necessary that you should have officers of your own people to govern you, or you were better without any government. I had to use my own discretion, and I withdrew the petition. I am fully decided upon that point—that you must have officers of yourselves, and not military politicians strutting around in your midst and usurping authority over you.”⁴

In a beautiful tribute to Brigham Young, Colonel Kane said: “Brigham Young should be your governor. His head is not filled with law books and lawyers’ tactics, but he has power to see through men and things.”

Kane also advised Bernhisel and Woodruff that they must not get involved in the slave controversy, but remain neutral on this issue. He told them that the two senators from Missouri, Atchison and Benton, were still their enemies, “and all the parties, with the whole of Congress, are a mass of corruption and abomination.”

Kane concluded: “You are better without any government from the hands of Congress than with a territorial Government.”⁵

Kane convinced Bernhisel that he should direct his efforts toward obtaining statehood. This was in



Above: United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., c. 1846

harmony with Babbitt’s instructions, and the two delegates thereafter unified their efforts toward this goal.

Unfortunately, the application for statehood was doomed to defeat without any real consideration of its merits. It became part of the Compromise of 1850 (a result of the slavery issue), which admitted California into the Union as a free state and which designated Utah and New Mexico as territories with the right to decide by popular sovereignty whether they would eventually become slave or free states. That they would reject slavery seemed a foregone conclusion, but the fact that they had a choice was a gesture to the South. But even if there had been no slavery controversy raging in Congress at the time, it does not seem likely that Deseret would have been admitted to the Union.⁶ ▣

Colonel Thomas L. Kane

(1822–1883), whose family had good connections in Pennsylvania and national politics, had formed close ties with the Mormons when Kane had been cared for when he became seriously ill during a visit to the church settlements on the Missouri River in 1846. He had earlier played a role in the calling of the Mormon Battalion, and he would continue to be an unofficial political adviser to Brigham Young until the latter’s death. Despite contemporary rumors, there is no evidence that Kane secretly joined the Mormon church.⁷



Right oval: Colonel Thomas L. Kane

Notes

1 Richard D. Poll, ed., Thomas G. Alexander, Eugene E. Campbell, and David E. Miller, assoc. eds., *Utah’s History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 156–57.

2 *Ibid.*, 157.

3 J. Keith Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1967), 55–56.

4 Taken from Wilford Woodruff’s journal, as found in *Journal History of the Church*, Ms, November 26, 1849.

5 Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 56.

6 Poll, *Utah’s History*, 157.

7 *Ibid.*



Republican mormon apostle, John Henry Smith, (pictured in still-life), was the president of the constitutional convention in 1895 when the seventh constitution was drafted finally enabling Utah to enter the Union.

PIONEERING POLITICS

During the latter half of the 19th century, Utah's political battles were fought almost exclusively along religious lines between the Mormon People's Party and the non-Mormon Liberal Party.

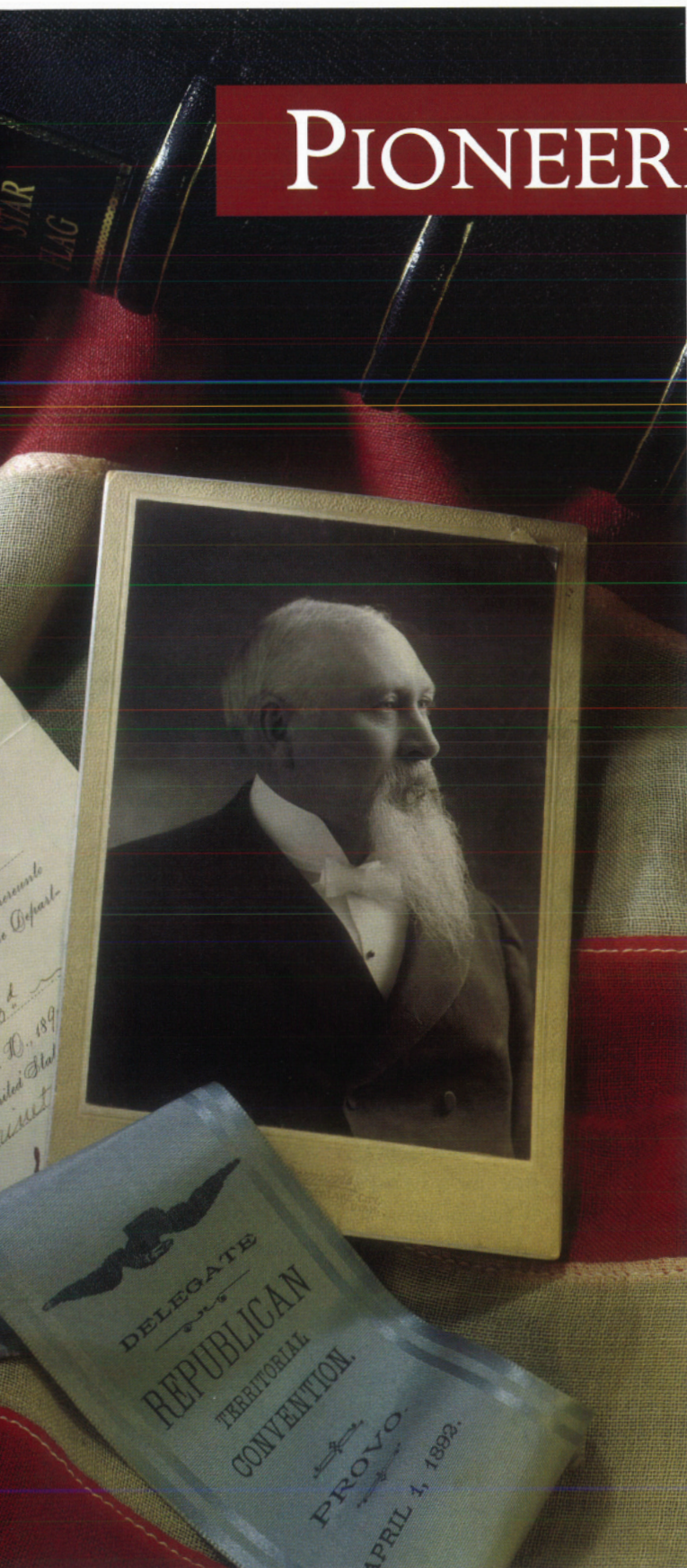
A closer look at the politics of Utah reveals a colorful history filled with twists and turns, dynamic characters and interesting influences. The old political adage "politics makes interesting bedfellows" holds true, even in an area where conservative policies rule and conservative people reign.

As the pioneers settled in and began to build their new city in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains the order that had prevailed in their previous societies continued. More of a theocracy than a democracy, Brigham Young led the way and many church leaders held high positions in the emerging territorial government. During a period when survival depended upon the rapid execution of building and development the system of government worked and enabled the pioneers to gain a strong foothold.

As the population grew, the tightly aligned church and state required an outreach and expansion to include all the pioneers in the Territory, not just those belonging to the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As mining, railroad, and trade began to flourish, there was a resulting influx of people who were of the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths and some of no faith whatsoever. By 1890 Utah's non-Mormon population reached a record high 44 percent.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Utah's political battles were fought almost exclusively along religious lines between the People's Party—which by all intents and purposes was the Mormon party—and the non-Mormon Liberal Party.

In most cases, the People's Party prevailed. However, as time went on the People's Party recognized that with the continued shifting of the demographics, they would not be able to continue to control the key offices of power.



John Henry Smith's forty-five star flag, courtesy Utah State University; Enabling Act, Utah State Archives and political ribbons courtesy John Sillito, Weber State University.

Mormon leader and Apostle Heber J. Grant urged the Church and the People's Party to share power with conservative "Gentiles" who shared their views and values. Grant felt that this would not only show a willingness to work together, but also would foster trust, build bridges, and change the focus of political rhetoric.

Under the agreement the People's Party and the conservatives in the Liberal Party nominated a citizen's ticket or a fusion slate for the city council. The ticket enjoyed the support of virtually all the Mormons and a sizeable number of the more conservative Liberal Party members. The ticket won in a landslide with over twice as many votes as the opposition.

Somehow there must be a lesson for twenty-first-century pioneers in discovering the benefits of a citizen's or fusion ticket that is focused not on party partisanship, but on priorities that will serve the people.

The politics ebbed and flowed for several years where the differences in elections were sometimes substantial and at other times surprising. At one point the Liberal Party traveled along the railroad registering those out of touch with life in the towns and cities but who would vote their ticket. The People's Party urged the city to import and hire more workers who would vote for their ticket. In politics more than anything it seems that history repeats itself and the more things change the more they remain the same.

Change was coming however, at least in form though not necessarily in function. Among the issues keeping Utah from statehood was the perception of U.S. leaders that the Church was controlling territorial politics. They said a true two-party system must be developed before Utah could become a state.

So in 1891, the People's Party was disbanded. The church hierarchy encouraged members to affiliate with one of the two national political parties. At the time the Republican Party was despised in Utah, primarily because most of the anti-Mormon legislation and many of the charges against the Church and its leaders were brought on by the Republicans. The GOP in Utah was looked upon with the same loathing members of the Church had held for the mobs in Missouri.

The Democrats went on a spree of bringing in large numbers of new members into their party, primarily from the disbanded People's Party. With prominent church leaders like Franklin D. Richards, Charles W. Penrose, Heber J. Grant, and B. H. Roberts joining the Democrats, it appeared that the Democratic Party was simply a new name for the People's Party. This was a serious concern for the Church's leadership, who feared that this would resurrect old divisions along religious lines and reestablish the barriers they were attempting to bring down.

In a change with far-reaching impact Joseph F. Smith, Francis M. Lyman, Anthon H. Lund, and John Henry Smith switched parties and joined the Republicans. The Church began to encourage a more equal distribution of members in each of the national political parties to further demonstrate to the rest of the country that Utah was a true two-party territory and worthy of joining the Union. To balance out the domination of the Democrats and tilt the scales back toward the middle, the First Presidency asked Democratic General Authorities to remain relatively quiet as they unleashed the Republicans to recruit members to the GOP.

Legend has it that leaders of the Church split some congregations down the center—those on the left became Democrat, those on the right became Republican. Another legend suggests that ward teachers were sent from house to house, inviting one family to be Democrat and the next to be Republican. Regardless of whether the legends are true, Utah became a two-party state, which hastened its acceptance.

Not only was the political scene balanced, but Democrats held positions of prominence at both the state and national levels of government for many years. During Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, for instance, Utahns headed the Federal Reserve and the Civil Aeronautics Corps. Another filled the Secretary of War post.

It wasn't until the Equal Rights Movement of the late 1960s, and the abortion debates of the early 1970s, that the balance shifted in favor of the Republican Party. The Republicans began to fit in more with what were perceived as Church values and their growing numbers and strength reflected it.

The ebbs and flows of the political tide continue to churn in Utah and across the country. Sadly, we continue to repeat the negative mistakes of the past and rarely deploy the successful solutions from the politics of days gone by. Perhaps it is time for a new Pioneer Party to emerge with true citizen's tickets filled with quality candidates who are committed to serving the people instead of satisfying their party. After all, pioneering is what pulled people from diverse backgrounds together to accomplish extraordinary results as they built communities and cities that have withstood the test of time. Pioneering politics is not about amassing power but pulling together for the good of people. ▣

Ice Skaters, by Danquart Anton Weggeland, 1867, courtesy Museum of Church History and Art, (11). James K. Polk, President of the United States, #LC-USZ62-23836, (12); The Senate, sketch by Theodore R. Davis, #LC-USZ62-1732, (12-13); United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., ca. 1846, photo by John Plumbe, #DAG no. 1230, (13); courtesy Library of Congress. Colonel Thomas L. Kane, Utah State Historical Society, (13). Cover photo of Utah's Road to Statehood, Edited by Bradford R. Cole & Kenneth R. Williams, cover photo by Jan Schou, courtesy Borge B. Andersen & Associates, photo by Jan Schou, (14-15).

National Highlights

SUP New Members

At Large	Jordan River Temple
Reed N. Barlow	Keith Olson
Kenneth A. McLelland	Mesa
Dr. Bruce R. Molen	Calvin B. Decker
Douglas V. Wilson	Lehi T. Smith
Box Elder	Ogden Pioneer
Robert D. Davis	Blaine Gledhill
Ken F. Kennedy	Kent B. Malan
Hurricane Valley	Settlement Canyon
Gerald R. Buckner	Norman S. Bevan
Wayne Edwards	Squaw Peak
Deloy Evans	Lee J. McQuivey
Clark Fawcett	Temple Fork
Wendell Holmes	Wayne R. Rich

New Life Members

Philip Asay Wasden, Lehi

Chapter Eternal

In loving memory of our SUP brothers who I have recently joined their pioneer forebears on the other side of the veil. Pioneer rejoices in the lives of these good men and extends its sympathies and good wishes to families and loved ones.

Keith Campbell, Hurricane Valley,
Life Member
Thomas William Champneys, Beehive,
Life Member
Brandt Child, Red Rock, Life Member
Clyde Collett, Pioneer Heritage
Howard C. Hacking, Tooele Settlement Canyon
John Claud Haws, Box Elder
Waldo Young Lesueur, Mesa
Clyde Reaveley, Beehive
Chic Vaughn, Ogden Pioneer
Robert Thomas Wagstaff, at large,
SUP National President, 1989

The Sons of Utah Pioneers Honors Tomorrow's Pioneers

The Sons of Utah Pioneers has contributed an estimate of \$47,100 to the annual scholarship awards program for high school seniors with 20 chapters participating. The Essay contest held in the elementary schools awarded about \$3,000 with 8 chapters participating. Winners include the following:

BOX ELDER CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarships:
Westin Shaffer, Emily Ida Nelson

BRIGHAM YOUNG CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarships:
Aubrey Halterman, Melissa Stevens,
Kassi Baird, Kayle Dene Fife

CEDAR CITY CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarships:
Thomas DeMille, Matthew Arnold

CENTERVILLE CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship:
Nicole Bernard

COTTON MISSION CHAPTER
\$500 Scholarships:
Dacia Clark, Daniel J. Vela,
Kseniya Kniazeva, Angela Wood,
Ashley M. Gordon

GROVE CITY CHAPTER
\$500 Scholarship:
Ashley Lynn Roland

HOLE IN THE ROCK CHAPTER
\$300 Scholarships:
Cade N. Christensen, Kasi Heaton

HOLLADAY CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship:
Anthony Scott 'AJ' Jones

LITTLE SALT LAKE CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship: Jamie Call

MILLS CHAPTER
Giang Tran

MOUNTAIN VALLEY CHAPTER
Megan Mair

MURRAY CHAPTER
\$500 Scholarships:
Ashlee Christensen,
Guadalupe Lizeth Hernandez

OLYMPUS HILLS CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship:
Dominic D. Carlson

SEVIER VALLEY CHAPTER
\$500 Scholarships:
Larissa Nay, Jenna Ware

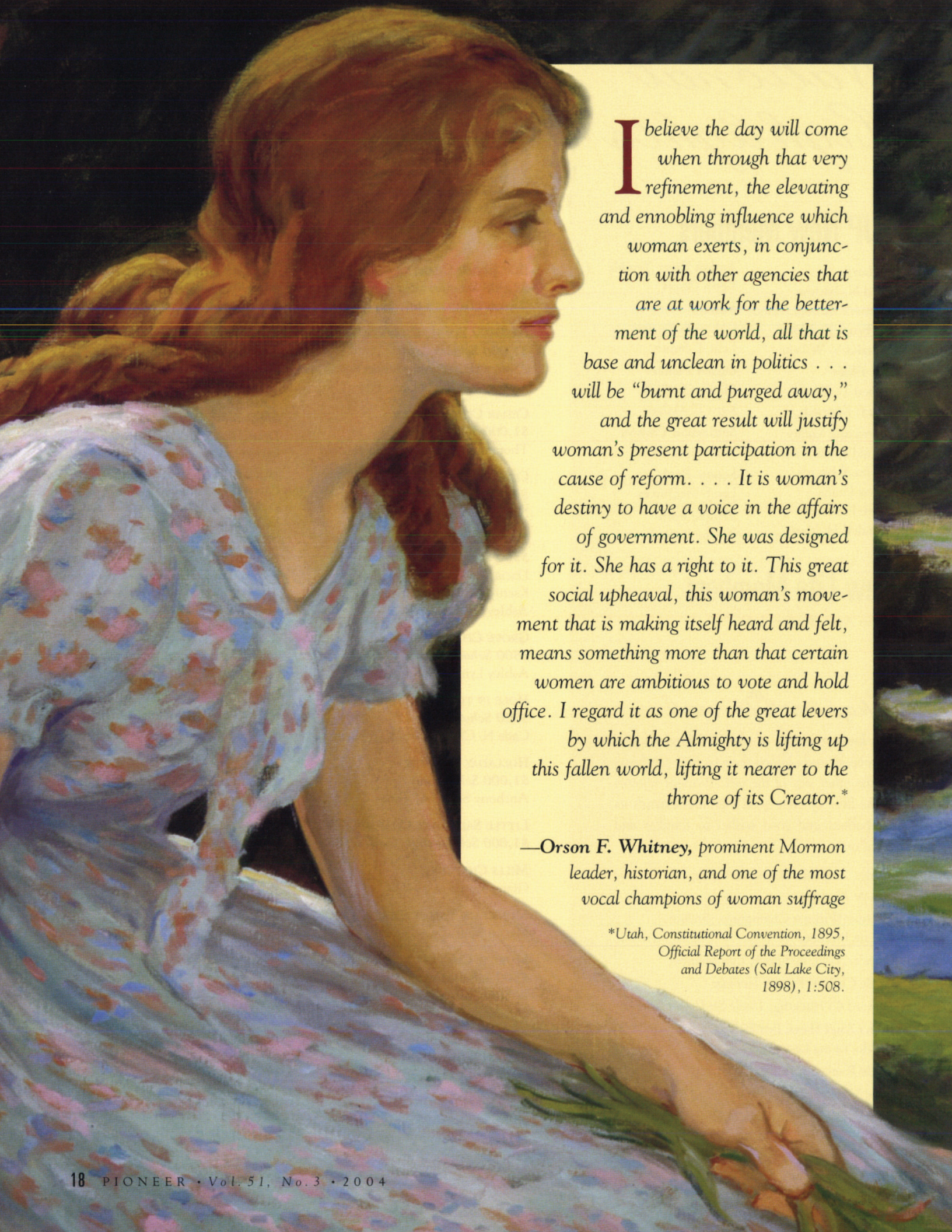
TAYLORSVILLE-BENNION CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship: Eliana Romero
\$500 Scholarships: John Ortiz,
Karen L. Haws

TEMPLE FORK CHAPTER
\$1,000 Scholarship: Steven Chalmers

TWIN PEAKS CHAPTER
\$500 Scholarships:
Davis High School: Courtney Eddy,
Lynette Purdy
Highland High School: Alison Croft,
Dilveen Mohammed Jassim, Stephanie
Lynn Mickelsen, Trishelle D. Review,
Liliana Ruiz, Erin A. Smithee,
Samantha Stechschulfe
Horizonte Instruction & Training Center:
Jessica Crandall, Kristina Deherrera,
Mario Alberto Gutierrez, Sandra
Guzman, Crystal Maka, Laura Ramos,
Jessica Rodriguez, George Guadalupe
Rojas, Saeeda Syed, Inez Kay
Whiteman, Kristen Woodmansee
Layton High School: Echo Phipps
West High School: Sarah Armstrong,
Yadira Arzaba, Nichole Brunson,
Johana Guzman, Ashley Mortensen,
Alison Reed, Vanessa Sullivan

\$1,000 Presidential Freedom Scholarships:(includes \$500 matching funds from Sons of Utah Pioneers):
Davis High School: Kandice Marie Lucas, Arbie Nersisian
Highland High School: Nicholas Kyle Massie, Andrea Romney
Horizonte Instruction & Training Center:
Abdurhamin Hagos,
Janice Vanessa Sanchez Mota
Layton High School:
Joshua Dillon McFarland
Tooele High School: Keith Rivera
West High School: Rachel Luker

\$1,000 John Morgan Youth Scholarships:
Davis High School: Linda Ho
Highland High School:
Lance Neil Richardson
Layton High School: Jamie Jespersen



I believe the day will come when through that very refinement, the elevating and ennobling influence which woman exerts, in conjunction with other agencies that are at work for the betterment of the world, all that is base and unclean in politics . . . will be "burnt and purged away," and the great result will justify woman's present participation in the cause of reform. . . . It is woman's destiny to have a voice in the affairs of government. She was designed for it. She has a right to it. This great social upheaval, this woman's movement that is making itself heard and felt, means something more than that certain women are ambitious to vote and hold office. I regard it as one of the great levers by which the Almighty is lifting up this fallen world, lifting it nearer to the throne of its Creator.*

—Orson F. Whitney, prominent Mormon leader, historian, and one of the most vocal champions of woman suffrage

*Utah, Constitutional Convention, 1895, Official Report of the Proceedings and Debates (Salt Lake City, 1898), 1:508.

The Women's Vote

By Rachel Matheson

To say the least, Mormons were not a very popular group in the late 1800s. Wild tales of “ravenous” polygamists had sprung up throughout nineteenth-century America, stories that were whispered about by the so-called respectable folk of the eastern United States caused most people to have a distorted and disturbing view of Latter-day Saint women. Some expressed their deep pity toward the “defenseless, slaving” Mormon women, who to them seemed like weak creatures, unable to think or act for themselves. They obviously had never heard the true stories about the strong pioneer women who lived in the heart of the desert. They knew little of what those valiant women had done in the face of persecution, their noble leadership in crossing the wilderness and their incredible innovation and persistence in establishing successful settlements in harsh climates.

Long before suffragists like Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth were fighting nationally for the rights of women, their “defenseless, slaving” sisters in Utah had long been living with the very rights those ladies were searching for.

Having a say in what happened to them, their children, families, and communities was not a new thing for the women of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. From the time Joseph Smith first organized the Church in 1830, the sister's votes had always mattered. They stood side by side with their husbands, fathers, and brothers in voting on a wide variety of issues, from sustaining church leadership to general decision making. Their opinions were just as important as any of the brethren's—which may have been one reason why so many women were drawn to the Church in the first place.

In 1847, the residents of Nauvoo were driven from their homes by the fierce mobs and forced to flee across the miles of prairie to the desert valleys of the

Rocky Mountains. Upon the historic words of Brigham Young, “This is the right place; drive on!” Utah was declared open for settlement.

The barren lands soon began to blossom, the territory grew in population, and a culture where all could help and be heard emerged.

Brigham Young, then the leader of the Church, was made governor when the land became a U.S. territory, and he was faced with the choice of whether or not the women of the Territory would vote. The decision was an easy one; if the ladies could already vote in church-related actions, why not give them the right of voting in state-related affairs?

However, before Utah would be admitted as a state, it was required to give up and eliminate two significant things: polygamy in the Church and (to the enragement of many women) the right of female suffrage. This was an interesting and contradicting combination of requirements—one believed by those in the East to liberate the pioneer women and the other limiting their influence by taking away their right to vote. Protests through the *Deseret News* and other newspapers rained throughout Utah during the years that followed the loss of voting rights for women.

So the pioneering women of Utah really won the right to vote twice. In sharp contrast to the long fight for women's suffrage nationally, the first bestowal of the right to vote came to Utah women in 1870 without any effort on their part as it was granted by the territorial legislature. However, the right was revoked by Congress in 1887 as part of a national effort to rid the Territory of polygamy. It was restored in 1895, when the right to vote and hold office was formally written into the constitution of the new state.

Brigham Young was first to propose the right, to no one's surprise. He spoke to members of the legislature, strongly advising them to vote on the measure. The governor at the time, S. A. Mann, wrote legislator Orson Pratt:



"Executive Office- Utah Territory, February 12, 1870
 "To the Hon. Orson Pratt, Speaker of the House,
 "Sir: I have the honor to inform you, that I have this day approved, signed and deposited in the Secretary's Office, "an Act" conferring upon women the elective franchise. In view of the importance of the measure referred to, it may not be considered improper for me to remark, that I have very grave and serious doubts of the wisdom and soundness of that political economy which makes the act a law of this Territory, and that there are many reasons which, in my judgment, are opposed to the legislation; but whatever these doubts and reasons may have been, in view of the unanimous passage of the act in both the House and the Council, and in deference to the judgment of many whose opinion I very much respect, I have, as before stated, approved of the bill, hoping that future experience may approve the wisdom of our action, and that the same may be found to be in harmony with the spirit and genius of the age in which we live.
 "Very respectfully, S. A. Mann, Acting Governor"

Although he was obviously reluctant to give women the vote and clearly did not share Brigham Young's vision for what the woman of the Territory could do when given the chance, S. A. Mann was the first governor in the history of America to sign a statement giving women the right to vote.

A committee consisting of well-known LDS women, such as Eliza R. Snow, church leaders' wives, and many future prophets' mothers and wives—whose purpose was to push the progression of the Church's Relief Society, used their organization to press the bill to be passed. After their right was granted, they graciously thanked the governor, saying "we could not have had the right without your sanction."

The very first female voter in Utah, after the right was bestowed for a second time, was Seraph Young, a relative of Brigham Young. The first election that women were able to vote in after that was in February 1870. It wasn't until two elections later that women in any other state were granted this right. Beginning with that first election, women in

Women as a Force in Utah History

After the suffrage was granted, the women of Utah did not simply rest with their newly won freedom. Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball, a leader in the Relief Society and later a nationally known woman's rights advocate, began a program of civic education for the women of the Territory. She helped form clubs, organized classes in history and political science, and directed the work generally. Mrs. Kimball and others saw that the Relief Society was put to good use in the promotion of activities and classes. Relief Society meetings became classes in government, mock trials, and symposia on parliamentary law.¹

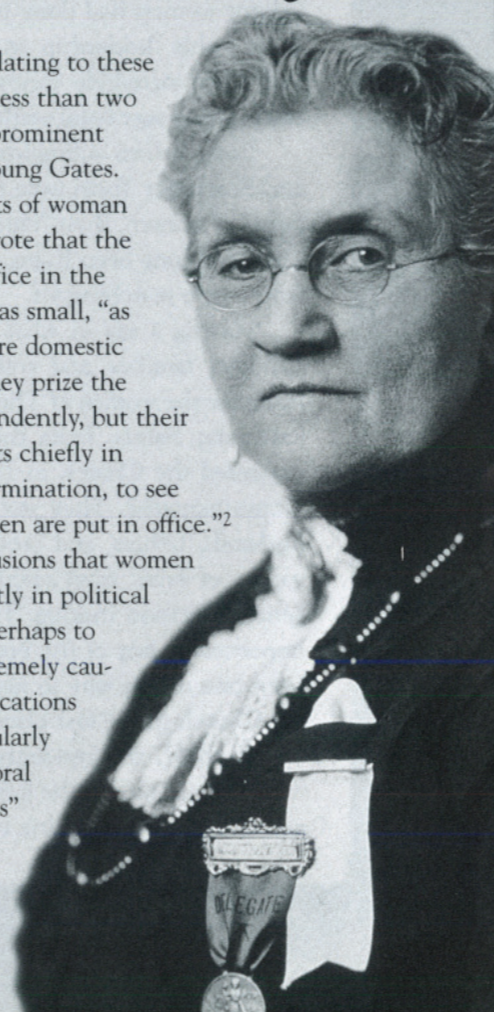
Susa Young Gates

(1856–1933) Author of a dozen books of merit; founder of many regional and national women's organizations, including the Daughters of Utah Pioneers; a leader in the National and International Councils of Women; an editor, poet, temple worker, musician, woman suffragist, and the mother of thirteen children!

In 1895 no one knew how many [women] would seek office—or what they would try to accomplish if they

won. Some observations relating to these questions were made after less than two decades of statehood by a prominent Utah woman, Mrs. Susa Young Gates. In an appraisal of the effects of woman suffrage in the state, she wrote that the proportion of women in office in the state at that time (1913) was small, "as most women in this state are domestic in their habits and lives; they prize the franchise and use it independently, but their attention to politics consists chiefly in their desire, nay their determination, to see that good and honorable men are put in office."²

Mrs. Gates held no illusions that women would behave very differently in political life than men did, except perhaps to make political parties "extremely cautious as to the moral qualifications of their candidates," particularly where "liquor and other moral affiliations of the candidates" were concerned.³



Right: Susa Young Gates

Utah were encouraged to attend political meetings to gain further knowledge of their government. Relief Society meetings were held on these subjects as well.

When Susan B. Anthony finally succeeded in bringing women's rights to the rest of the country, the women of Utah must have outwardly nodded with respectful approval while internally they must have had a good laugh. Throughout America, people had thought the women of Utah to be a weak and wayward bunch with no backbone and no power to change their circumstances. Yet these women had had the same rights as men for longer than any other group of women in the United States and were busy building communities and making a difference.

Most people today consider Susan B. Anthony's valiant work for women as the standard for the suffrage movement, and unfortunately, only a few, if any, stop to ponder such stalwarts as Eliza R. Snow, Sarah M. Kimball, Rachel Grant, and Phoebe Woodruff. While they are hardly mentioned in the history books, their pursuit of rights with real responsibility was well ahead of their time.

"Women themselves too often make the mistake of urging that the vote will enable them to purify politics, and to reform the world," she wrote. "What nonsense!" Women would do as much good as men would with the same rights, she said, and would do no more harm than men would.

As for the disruptive effects of equal political rights upon domestic life, Mrs. Gates denied that giving women the franchise had had any ill effects. "On the contrary," she observed, "it tends to increase woman's poise, for she has nothing left to ask for, and so turns with delight to giving her best self, her fuller attention in the usual channels of domestic and social life, with the added zest of vital interest in civic affairs."⁴

Eliza Roxey Snow

(1804–1887) Poetess, Relief Society president, and strong advocate and leader in woman's rights.

Though the women of Utah had had little to do with the actual passage of the bill, they were gratified at its enactment. At a meeting of the Female Relief Society in Salt Lake City on February 19, seven days after the passage of the act, Eliza R. Snow, a plural wife of both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, proposed

As we look about today in search of role models willing to stand up and be counted on issues that really matter, the pioneer women of early Utah stand as stellar examples. These great women not only physically pioneered their way across the continent, they mentally pioneered their way across prejudice and past learning to lead the way to a time when women could share their talents with people around the block and around the world.

Pioneer women worked so diligently in the suffrage movement and had the vision to not only see the day when they would vote and have equal standing, but could also see our day, when Utah's legislature would be filled with capable, talented women—including the State's first female governor, Olene Walker. On the shoulders of the great pioneer women of Utah's past, women today can be confident that their voices will be heard and their vote will matter. ▣

Rachel Matheson, at age 14, is a gifted young writer with interests in LDS church/Pioneer history, Civil War history and Revolutionary War history. She currently resides in Cedar Hills, Utah.

an expression of gratitude to Acting Governor Mann for signing the bill. The proposal was adopted and a committee made up of wives of some of the most prominent men in the Territory drafted the resolution and presented it to the acting governor.⁵

Already, on February 14, 1870, two days after the passage of the bill, women had voted in a municipal election in Salt Lake City.⁶ ▣

Excerpts from Thomas G. Alexander, "An Experiment in Progressive Legislation: The Granting of Woman Suffrage in Utah in 1870," 26–28; and Jean Bickmore White, "Gentle Persuaders: Utah's First Women Legislators," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (Winter 1970): 37.

Notes

1 Susa Young Gates, "The Suffrage Movement," Ms. and "History, Chapter, Woman Suffrage in Utah," Gates File, USHS, 16.

2 Susa Young Gates to Arthur W. Page of Women's Work, answering the inquiries of a number of prominent English women as to the effects of woman suffrage, 1913. Reprinted in Kate B. Carter, comp., *Woman Suffrage in the West* ([Salt Lake City], 1943), 304.

3 *Ibid.*, 305.

4 *Ibid.*, 306–7.

5 Many of the women were also plural wives. *Deseret News Weekly*, March 2, 1870; Edward W. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City* (Salt Lake City, 1886), 435; Ralph Lorenzo Jack, "Woman Suffrage in Utah as an Issue in the Mormon and Non-Mormon Press of the Territory, 1870–1887," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1954, 32.

6 Tullidge, *Salt Lake City*, 437; Jack, "Woman Suffrage in Utah," 21; *Deseret Evening News* (Salt Lake City), May 9, 1947.

Pioneer Spotlight

Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon: Utah's First Woman Legislator

The night of November 3, 1896, marked the end of an election that attracted national attention—a contest for a state senate seat that involved a prominent Mormon polygamist and his fourth wife.

Utah's first [election] since statehood, was a contest in the Sixth Senatorial District in Salt Lake County, where Angus M. Cannon, Sr., and his physician wife, Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon, were competing.

When the returns were in, Dr. Cannon was one of the five Democrats elected in the district, having polled 11,413 votes. Her husband, who was expected to benefit by his prominence as president of the Salt Lake Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, drew only 8,742 votes. Also running on the Republican ticket was one of Dr. Cannon's personal friends and a co-worker for many years in the woman suffrage movement, Emmeline B. Wells.¹

Dr. Cannon had become the first woman state senator in the United States in a contest with both her husband and a close friend—a dramatic beginning for a legislative career.

Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon is the best known and most colorful of Utah's women politicians of her era.²



Born on July 1, 1857, in Llandudno, Wales, she came to Utah as a young child with her parents. Her father died only three days after the family's arrival in Salt Lake City, and her mother married a widower, James P. Paul. Despite the family's limited means, she dreamed of studying to become a physician. To realize this goal she saved as much as she could from her salary as a school teacher and later as a typesetter for the *Deseret Evening News* and the *Woman's Exponent*. She had been "called" by the First Presidency of the LDS church for the typesetting position and had learned to set Scandinavian type in order to earn higher wages.

In 1876 she enrolled in the premedical department of the University of Deseret. Two years later she was blessed and "set apart" by LDS church president John Taylor for medical studies. Arriving at the University of Michigan in the fall of 1878 with slender financial resources, she began her studies, washing dishes and making beds at a boardinghouse to help defray costs. She graduated with the M.D. degree on her twenty-third birthday, July 1,

1880. Feeling that training in oratory would enable her to be more effective as a lecturer on public health, she went to Philadelphia and enrolled in both the University of Pennsylvania and the National School of Elocution and Oratory. In 1882 she received a Bachelor of Science degree from the university, the only woman in a class of seventy-five. She also received a Bachelor of Oratory degree from the school of elocution.

After returning to Utah she built a private medical practice and served as a resident physician at Deseret Hospital. On October 6, 1884, she became the fourth wife of Angus M. Cannon, a man who was twenty-three years her senior and a member of the board of the hospital. After the birth of her first child, she left the state in an effort to help her husband avoid imprisonment by federal authorities. She went to Europe, where she visited leading hospitals; after returning to Utah she established the first training school for nurses in the state. When her second child was born she again left her medical practice to live in San Francisco. On her return she resumed her practice, specializing in the diseases of women and children.

Mattie Cannon, as she was usually known, became an ardent Democrat and also played an active role in the woman suffrage movement. Before her election to the senate she was active in suffrage groups in Utah and spoke at a national suffrage meeting at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. In 1898 she went to Washington, D.C., to speak at a convention marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Seneca Falls

declaration of women's rights and appeared before a congressional committee urging the lawmakers to give women the vote. Of this convention Dr. Cannon wrote to her friend Emmeline B. Wells that "Utah received her full share of honor and recognition, and was acknowledged to be in the vanguard of progress. On every occasion was her representative treated in the most courteous and considerate manner."³

Because of her unique position as a physician, state senator, and plural wife, Mattie Cannon was the subject of several interviews by writers for leading publications. She was described by the English socialist Beatrice Webb as a "vivacious frank little Senator. . . ." Mrs. Webb's appraisal continued: "She was such a self-respectful vigorous pure-minded little soul: sensitive yet unself-conscious, indiscreet yet loyal. She had no training for the political career she had chosen, [but] as a friend

I should rely on her warm sympathy and freedom from the meaner motives of life."⁴

As usual, Dr. Cannon strongly defended polygamy in the Webb interview. She also offered a firm defense of plural marriage when she was interviewed a few days after her election by a writer for the *San Francisco Examiner*. Dr. Cannon maintained that a plural wife was not as much a slave as a single woman. She noted that "if her husband has four wives, she has three weeks of freedom every single month." She was firm in her defense of women working and engaging in worthwhile activities outside of the home: "Somehow I know that women who stay home all the time have the most unpleasant homes there are. You give me a woman who thinks about something besides cook stoves and wash tubs and baby flannels, and I'll show you, nine times out of ten, a successful mother."⁵

[Mattie Cannon] was frequently described by her contemporaries as attractive, charming, and completely feminine. With the charm went an independent spirit; she had a mind of her own and interests of her own to pursue in her legislative career.

Within a month [of taking her seat in the senate] she had introduced three bills: "An Act to Protect the Health of Women and Girl Employees," "An Act Providing for the Compulsory Education of Deaf, Dumb and Blind Children," and "An Act Creating a State Board of Health and Defining Its Duties."

Below: Susan B. Anthony (seated in center, wearing spectacles) and the Reverend Anna Howard Shaw (standing at the left with her hand on a chair) met with a group of Utah Woman suffrage leaders, including Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon (standing farthest left), c. 1895.



The first made it mandatory for employers to provide "chairs, stools, or other contrivances" where women or girls employed as clerks might rest when not working."⁶ The second made education of deaf, dumb, or blind children at the state school mandatory (with certain exceptions).⁷

The third measure was the one in which Dr. Cannon was most vitally involved [and] became part of the revised statutes that were compiled by a special commission and provided the basis for a statewide attack on problems of sanitation and contagious disease.⁸ The act established a seven-member State Board of Health to encourage establishment of local boards of health and to carry out a number of functions designed to improve sanitary conditions, water supply, and disease control. Dr. Cannon was one of the first members appointed by Governor Wells to the board.

During the second half of her four-year senate term, in the Third Legislature in 1899, Dr. Cannon introduced an act that contained much-needed rules and regulations in a number of public health areas. [This] act provided for the suppression of nuisances and contagious diseases, prescribed quarantine rules and regulations, provided for burial permits, promoted protection of water supplies, and established rules for inspection of school buildings and exclusion of persons with contagious or infectious diseases from schools.⁹

Another measure relating to health introduced by Dr. Cannon in the Third Legislature authorized the erection of a hospital building for the Utah State School for the Deaf and Dumb. She introduced another bill in 1899 providing for the teaching in the public schools of the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics. [It] was passed by the senate but defeated in the house. She

spent considerable time studying narcotics problems.

Mattie Cannon did not run for office after her term expired. She continued to serve on the State Board of Health and to practice medicine. During the last years of her life, she lived in Los Angeles, where she worked in the Graves Clinic. She died in Los Angeles July 10, 1932, and was buried in Salt Lake City. The main funeral speaker was none other than B. H. Roberts, who had predicted dire consequences if women were given the vote—to say nothing of entering office. Both faithful Democrats, Mattie Cannon and Roberts had become good friends over the years since the constitutional convention. ▀

Excerpts from Jean Bickmore White, "Gentle Persuaders: Utah's First Women Legislators," Utah Historical Quarterly 38, no. 1 (Winter 1970): 31–49.

Notes

1 "Election Returns from Salt Lake County," Salt Lake Tribune, November 14, 1896.

2 Several biographical articles on Dr. Martha Cannon have been published. Data herein, unless otherwise cited, is from an unpublished manuscript by her daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth C. McCrimmon, in the Utah State Historical Society library, and from Andrew Jensen, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Published by author, 1901–1936), 4: 86–88.

3 McCrimmon Ms, 17.

4 David A. Shannon, ed., Beatrice Webb's American Diary, 1898 (Madison, WI: Publisher, 1963), 134–36.

5 Interview published in the San Francisco Examiner, November 8, 1896; reprinted in the Salt Lake Herald, November 11, 1896.

6 Utah, Laws of Utah, 1897, ch. 11, pp. 24–25.

7 Ibid., ch. 20, p. 36.

8 Utah, Revised Statutes, 1898, Title 24, 315–18.

9 Utah, Public Documents, 1899–1900, Sec. 22, "Report of the State Board of Health," 4–8.

Dreaming of Zion, by Lee Green Richards, courtesy Springville Museum of Art, (18–19). Susa Young Gates, (20); Martha Hughes Cannon, (22); Utah Women suffrage leaders, (23); Emmeline B. Wells, (24); courtesy Utah State Historical Society.



Emmeline B. Wells: Political Pioneer Leader

It would truly be difficult to find another woman who influenced as many lives as Emmeline B. Wells, either in the pioneer days of her living or the women of today. Some people are aware of the great contributions she made, but to others hers is just a name of another pioneer woman.

Carol Cornwall Madsen summed up Emmeline's personality pretty accurately when she wrote, in one sentence, in her article about Emmeline, published in the *Ensign*, July 2003, "She was at once a family woman and an ambitious professional, a sentimental poet and a pragmatic business woman, a romantic and a realist." The words *political activist* may not have even been used at the time of her great involvement, but they too could be used in describing her today.

Each of these attributes could be the theme for a dissertation on

Guest Editorial

By Mary A. Johnson

President International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers

her life, and I will touch on some of them, but this article will be mostly concerned with her great desire to see equality for women.

Emmeline was born in Petersham, Worcester County, Massachusetts, February 29, 1828. Education and cultural pursuits were important to her family and she received a good education. She was a precocious child and it has been said that being the seventh child in the family she learned much from her older siblings. When three years old she would go to school with other family members and if she got tired she would just lie down under a desk and take a nap. By the time she was sixteen she had graduated from school and began teaching, a career that she turned to many times in her life.

On July 29, at the age of fifteen, Emmeline married James Harris. In September, 1844, the first baby, a boy, was born to this couple, but he lived only a few weeks and soon after his death James deserted Emmeline. She later married Bishop Newel K. Whitney and traveled with his family to Winter Quarters and then to the Valley. Bishop Whitney died in 1850, leaving her a widow again, but this time she had two daughters. After struggling to make a living for her family she married President Daniel H. Wells and had three daughters by him. When he died she was again left a widow, this time for thirty years.

Leader was Emmeline's second name. She was always involved in church, political, and cultural

events. Her home was a spot where everyone was welcome and could find answers to difficult questions of the day. She became a contributor to the *Woman's Exponent*, using the pen name of "Blanche Beechwood." Later she became an assistant editor of the *Exponent* then editor in 1877. In this position she was able to speak out for the rights of women. In fact, she became their spokesperson in public and political affairs.

Emmeline's interest in woman suffrage gave her prominence, not only in Utah but also throughout the nation. In Utah she was for several years as a member of the Territorial Central Committee and of the Salt Lake County committee of the People's Party, and in 1882, a member of the Constitutional Convention (DUP lesson December 1993, 152). She was thrilled when Utah women were given the right to vote in 1870 and was unhappy (irate) when this privilege was taken away from them. She worked with the Central Committee of the People's Party, the Church's political party, as she was a member of several constitutional conventions when Utah was attempting to become a state.

She was nominated for the territorial legislature but was forced to withdraw when it was not clear from the constitution whether women could hold elective office. In 1879 she experienced firsthand discrimination when she was denied the office of Salt Lake City treasurer because she was a woman (Emmeline

Blanche Woodward Wells—Staci De Vroom).

She had already become involved with the female reform movement and Elizabeth Cady Stanton's woman's suffrage movement. In 1874 Emmeline became the vice-president for Utah of the National Woman Suffrage Movement. As part of this movement her voice was heard at conventions in the Eastern States and even in London at the International Convention. She spoke out for Utah Women and their rights as well as for the freedom to vote for all women. Her first public work outside of Utah came at the urgent request of Susan B. Anthony and others who desired her attendance at the national Suffrage Association held at Washington, D.C., in 1879. While there she met with many political leaders to try to correct false impressions about her people in Utah.

Emmeline Wells was truly a champion of women as is shown in one of her articles written for the *Woman's Exponent* in January 1873—"... but the ladies of Utah, as a class, exercise the suffrage on their own honest convictions, vote for the candidates whom they favor, and do so intelligently, with as sound reasons for their actions, and with as high an appreciation of the ballot as can be shown by the male voters of any part of this Republic."

Let us honor her for her dedicated effort to improve conditions for women in all ways and hope she could praise us today for our actions at the ballot box. ▀

PIONEER CONCEPT OF
*Civic and
Political Life*
IN EARLY DAY UTAH

A good constitution and form of government will be preserved by men of wisdom and virtue, and . . . good citizenship must be preserved by a virtuous education of youth. —William Penn

By Elder Levi Edgar Young
(of the First Council of Seventy) Address delivered
Sunday, August 7, 1938, over Radio Station KSL

The Mayflower Compact was one of the great civic documents of our early American history. Written by men of the old English school of political life, it was the expression of the most democratic ideal of government that the world has ever had. With the advent of the Pilgrim fathers to America, the old Anglo-Saxon town government was given crystallized form and the spirit of it lies at the very root of the Constitution of the United States.

The people of a town would hold a meeting called the town meeting and would consider all subjects that were for the welfare of the inhabitants as a whole. Laws were made by the group, and officers were chosen by all the people taking part. It was virtually a government by all the people for all the people. The New England town government was carried westward by the people of Puritan descent and this type of government was always sacred to the pioneer groups who settled the frontier.

The pioneers to Utah in the late forties were of the old New England and Quaker type of Englishmen. The first company under Brigham Young in 1847 was mostly Puritan by descent. President Young was of New England parentage and his first company was a selected migrant group, strong minded, thoughtful, and self-controlled. The Latter-day Saint groups were all well organized and bound together by ties of blood, religion, and neighborhood. Their hardships and common dangers were consolidating forces, and the people worked as a unit in times of danger and trouble. The most potent unifying factor, however, was their religion. Professor Edward Channing of Harvard University says:



"The Mormon movement to Utah in some respects was like other religious enterprises; but in size, success and permanence, it far outstripped them." On the plains every company was well organized and manifested its spirit of government in strict obedience to rules and regulations that had been agreed upon by the group as a whole. The leaders of the groups were men chosen for their power of initiative and resourcefulness and yet on the other hand, no policy was pursued or decision as to action made unless it had been presented for discussion and voted on by the people.

Before leaving Nauvoo their leader had said: "Let each company with their captains and presidents decide how many can go, and then choose out a sufficient number of able-bodied and expert men to take teams, seeds and farming utensils to go as pioneers to prepare for putting in spring crops." As President Young spoke, the people acted in unity to obey instructions. Later when the Saints had begun to live here in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, Wilford Woodruff was able to say:

"We have accomplished more this year [1847] than can be found on record concerning an equal number of men in the same time since the days of Adam. We have traveled with heavily laden wagons more than a thousand miles over rough roads, mountains and canyons, searching out a land, a resting place for the Saints. We have laid out a city two miles square, and built a fort of hewn timber seven miles from the mountains and of sun-dried bricks or adobe, surrounding ten acres of ground . . . besides planting ten acres of corn and vegetables."

This method of associated industry lay at the root of the success of the pioneers, and the principle of cooperation was further exemplified in the organization of mercantile corporations and other forms of business. Cities were laid out and named; meeting and school houses were built by all the people doing their share of the work. Such buildings were real community centers.

In an article published by the *Harvard Graduates Magazine*, Vol. 20, Prof. Frederick J. Turner says:

"The Mormon exodus was led by men of New England origin. Whatever may be thought of their revelations, the political and industrial basis of their society, which they spread throughout the Great Basin, was the New England town, sharpened by them to the new uses of an irrigation community, the economic unit of the Arid West."

When the Mormons settled these vales, some form of local government became necessary. They naturally adopted the political usages to which they had been accustomed in their old homes. Their leaders of New England descent understood the old forms of civic life that were common in the early history of that part of the United States. The Utah colonists were born and bred in the best institutions of civic life, and they therefore selected those offices and forms of procedure that were best adapted to their new environment. They found themselves in a barren land, isolated from civilization, and as they spread out into the neighboring valleys, they were compelled for protection to group themselves into small settlements or towns, which were of an ecclesiastical character, yet with political tendencies. These towns were church communities where all took part in the government of the town and in the worship within the Church. The fundamental religious coherence bred in the people fundamental ideas of civic life, which became common to all.

The old English town meeting was the most democratic and best form of government known in the world. Developed in New England from the earliest days of its settlement, it became the unit of civic life in the United States wherever Englishmen took up land to colonize. The town meeting in Utah was like the New England type, but it was more democratic in the fact that the women as well as the men were allowed to take part in deliberations and vote. Like the New England towns, the towns of Utah were the original creations on a virgin soil, and instead of being separate and independent municipalities, they were a part of the State, forming together one body politic. In March, 1849, a call was issued for a convention to consider the political needs of the people, and they determined to petition Congress for a territorial form of government. Before the middle of March, the committee submitted a constitution, which was accepted by the convention. This State constitution known as the Constitution of the State of Deseret provided for a provisional form of government until Congress should act. The State government was organized under the Constitution, Brigham Young was made governor and other officers were elected, all of whom were to take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States.

The boundaries of the new State were extensive. They were drawn to include not only the present state of

**If America is to live, if our
civic liberty is to grow
larger and more hopeful in
the future, our moral and
spiritual values must be
deeply rooted in religion.**

Utah, but all of Arizona, nearly all of Nevada, the whole of southern California and parts of Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. The seaport of San Diego was included in order to make Salt Lake City more accessible.

When the Legislature of Deseret met in July, 1849, plans were completed for seeking admission to the Union. A memorial was adopted by the legislature, signed by citizens and sent to Washington. With the memorial was carried a copy of the Constitution of the State of Deseret. Statehood was refused for various reasons, but the government of the State of Deseret continued to function until Congress passed a bill providing for the organization of the Territory of Utah. This was done in September, 1850, but the boundaries of the new territory were not so extensive as those proposed for Deseret. In April of 1851, the legislature of the State of Deseret was dissolved and the State of Deseret was replaced by the Territory of Utah. Brigham Young was retained as governor and other prominent Mormons were given important appointments.

With the advent of the organization of the Utah Territory, cities were laid out and chartered by the legislature. Salt Lake City was chartered in 1851, and it showed that the colonizers were reared to an interest and a knowledge of municipal and civic life. The charter provided for a mayor, four aldermen, and nine councilors. The City Council had the power to establish, support, and regulate common schools; to make regulations for the prevention of the spread of contagious diseases; to establish markets and marketplaces; to license, tax and regulate theatrical and other shows and amusements; to tax, restrain, prohibit, and suppress tippling houses, dram shops, gaming houses, and other disorderly houses; to provide for the extinguishing of fires and to establish a standard of weights and measures, etc.

As Salt Lake City arose from the desert, it was distinguished for its trees, lawns, and flowers. Religion directed the people in all their work and affiliated itself with all the pursuits of their lives. In 1869 the *American Presbyterian* printed in Philadelphia had the following from the pen of the Rev. A. M. Stewart:

"Salt Lake City is the most quiet, orderly, and the best governed city in the world." A society like this is the very hearthstone of patriotism.

The work of the pioneers was an undertaking in which human beings associated together for the purposes

of joint and common interests. Such economic conditions lie at the very foundation of democracy, for from such conditions laws become the expression of the lives of the people. Such laws made by the common consent of all are lived by the people, and this again is the pure democracy that sprang out of their town governments in the early days.

The greatest problem of men in all history has been to secure both government and liberty, how to weld men into a progressive society without destroying personal identity. The cooperative idealism of the pioneers came nearer to solving that problem than any other idealism in American history. It struck at the root of the problem of the ages which taught that the whole of history consists in the struggle between the principle of good and the principle of evil. The dream of those pioneers in government individually and socially was that good should be supreme.

Out of the old ideal of democracy as maintained by the Mormon pioneers is a lesson fraught with meaning, for in their simple ways of life and government, they gave firm allegiance to the Constitution of the United States because they believed it to be the expression of a free government the like of which was never before in all history. The pioneers wanted their civic liberty kept free from the doctrine of permanent economic and social classes, and of class struggles. They taught that if they were to have industrial peace they must have the industrial virtues, which are honesty in work and fidelity to public security, public order, and the unity of our national life.

President Young taught that citizens must follow the principles of self-control and realize that it is honest labor and patient endeavor that bring men to the ideal of self-government and obedience to the nobler impulses of the spirit. "Men are free," said D. H. Lawrence, "when they are in a living homeland; not when they are straying and breaking away. Men are free when they are obeying some deep inward voice of religious belief. Obeying from within." This was the ideal of the simple political government of the pioneers in early Utah. If America is to live, if our civic liberty is to grow larger and more hopeful in the future, our moral and spiritual values must be deeply rooted in religion. Our civic liberty is the ideal of the more abundant life, of realizing life in its largest possibilities. It is as James Truslow Adams points out in his *Epic of America* "that dream of a land in which life should be

better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement."

America needs re-idealizing. It needs the higher moral values and spiritual standards the pioneers had in 1847. Its people must work together in a common loyalty. William Penn laid down some forceful ideas to his people when he founded Pennsylvania. "Governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them," he said, "and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them they are ruined too. Let men be good and the government cannot be bad. But if men be bad, let the government be ever so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn." At the close of his remarkable statement, he says that a good constitution and form of government will be preserved by men of wisdom and virtue, and that good citizenship must be preserved by a virtuous education of youth.

History knows no greater line of men than the prophets of ancient Israel. Among them was Isaiah, who believed that a nation has a soul, and that soul is great to the extent that the citizens of the Nation are great. They were idealists through and through and lived in the very air of the City of God. They taught that men are free spirits in God's world, and whether poor or men of wealth, they all bear that same relationship to their maker. Every man stands like every other in the vast assemblage of free spirits, linked together by their common relations to the Supreme Spirit. Such they are and such they must ever be. Man is a divine unit in God's world. Shiller, the German poet, put this thought in eloquent words when he wrote: "The individual must become the State, by the common man ennobling himself to high purposes." This the Mormon pioneers did, for they never talked about the RIGHTS OF MEN, but in their ideas of self-government—the government that teaches man to govern himself—they became resourceful and self-controlled men, and thought of the better phrase: "How can I serve?"

It was because of this spirit developed in the hearts of those people that we had the fine formation of the cooperative spirit in early days. Brigham Young and his little band of followers resolved to build a noble edifice of economic fact, reared by human toil and held firmly in place by the average property of all who had part in its building. ▀

Salt Lake City, view of South Temple, artist unknown, courtesy Museum of Church History and Art, (26–27). The Great Seal of the State of Utah, (29) and the Utah State flag, (30) courtesy Utah Travel Council. Mormon Tabernacle Statehood celebration photo courtesy Utah State Historical Society, (32).

Utah State Symbols

State Flag

The original Utah State Flag, which was adopted by the State Legislature in 1896 and revised in 1913, consisted of a solid white state seal on a light blue background.

The Utah State Flag, as we know it today, was originally designed for the battleship *Utah* in 1912. It was later made the official flag of Utah when Governor William Spry signed House Joint Resolution I in 1913.

Symbols on Utah's State Flag

The Utah State Flag has a blue background with the State Seal inscribed in the center and is easily distinguished from other state flags.

American Eagle with wings outspread, grasping six arrows in its talons, symbolizes protection in peace and war.

Bee Hive is the symbol of industry.

Sego Lily is a symbol of peace.

Draped American Flag is the symbol of our support to the nation.

"1847" is the year the Mormon pioneers entered the Salt Lake Valley.

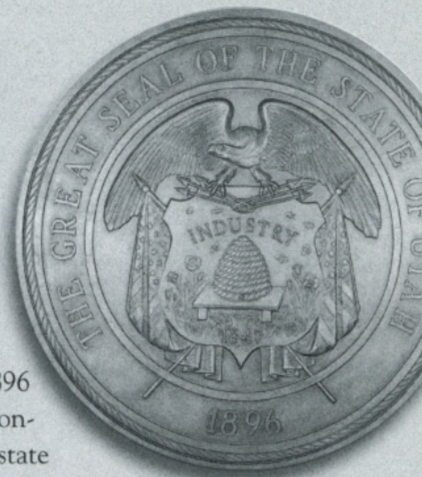
"1896" is the year Utah was admitted as the 45th state (January 4, 1896).

Emblem and Motto

The Beehive and word *industry* became the official motto and emblem for Utah on March 4, 1959. Industry is associated with the symbol of the beehive. The early pioneers had few material resources at their disposal and therefore had to rely on their own "industry" to survive. The beehive was chosen as the emblem for the provisional State of Deseret in 1848 and was maintained along with the word *industry* on the seal and flag when Utah became a state in 1896. ▀

Source

http://www.utah.com/visitor/state_facts/symbols.htm



The Struggle



Considered tantamount to independence in local affairs, Mormon leaders struggle for statehood and finally succeeded after a 47-year battle.

From the time the Mormon pioneers first arrived in Utah, a fervent goal of the vast majority of the region's residents was overcoming inferior territorial status by gaining statehood. Statehood was considered tantamount to independence in local affairs, with state officers chosen and answerable to the electorate, rather than where officials were outsiders appointed by outsiders, as was the case with territorial government. The first attempt at statehood in 1849–50 aimed to persuade Congress to admit the so-called state of Deseret, stretching from the Colorado Rockies to the Sierra Nevadas. The nation's lawmakers, however, were not inclined to grant the Mormons control over such a vast domain, especially without the 60,000 eligible voters required for an area to be admitted as a state.

Undaunted, Mormon leaders sponsored a second attempt at statehood in 1856, sending Congress a draft of a constitution for a state much more limited in size. This occurred during the Republican Party's first presidential campaign featuring a platform plank denouncing the "twin relics of barbarism," slavery and polygamy, the latter of which the Latter-day Saint leaders had recently acknowledged to be part of church doctrine and practice. Although some in the rival Democratic Party initially encouraged the statehood effort, such cordiality was short-lived because reports of Mormon defiance of appointed officials in particular and the government in general soon prompted newly elected President James Buchanan to send United States Army troops to quell the presumed "Mormon Rebellion." Any hopes of statehood at the time

le for Statehood

By Edward Leo Lyman

were casualties of these developments. Similarly, a third effort in 1862 was not given serious consideration by a Congress then in the process of prohibiting plural marriage by federal statute.

When another movement for Utah's admission into the Union was mounted in 1876, its sponsors essentially disregarded recent warnings from visiting federal executive and legislative leaders that statehood was not possible so long as plural marriage continued to be condoned and practiced in Utah. Similarly, most members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints placed their highest value on "following counsel," in virtually all matters relating to their church-centered lives. Thus they appeared to be in direct opposition to the long-standing American principle of the separation of church and state. Particularly after the anti-Mormon Liberal Party was organized in 1870, there was much emphasis on church interference in politics as a major argument against granting Utah the measure of independence that statehood would bring. However, there is considerable evidence that this was something of a pretext for allowing the non-Mormon minority in the Territory to continue to dominate political affairs through the Gentile-appointed officials, who would rule until statehood arrived.

Amidst increasing hostility and bitterness between the Mormons and their opponents, the territorial legislature adopted a new tactic for an 1882 statehood attempt, demanding "a republican form of government" so that citizens in Utah could enjoy the blessings of liberty the founding fathers of the nation had sought to assure for all citizens. Although appropriate legislation was introduced in Congress on several occasions over the next year, all such bills were promptly pigeonholed. During the ensuing years, a so-called anti-polygamy "raid" escalated, with increasing prosecutions but no real submission from the Mormons.

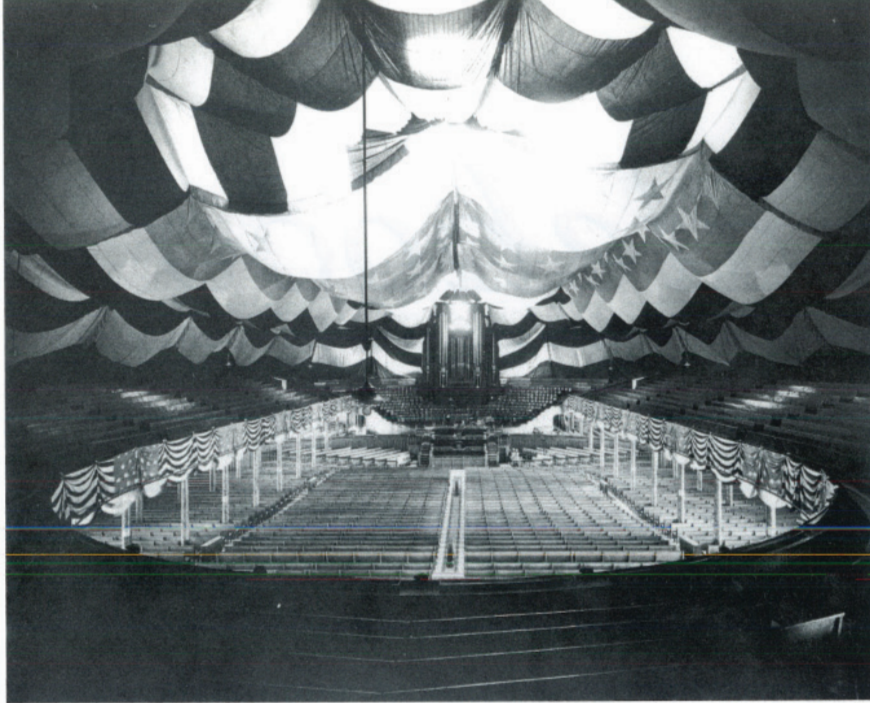
Throughout the four-decade struggle, most of the legislation and law-enforcement activity inimical to Mormon interests had come from the Republican Party. But in the mid-1880s, with the coming of the Democratic Grover Cleveland administration, church leaders hoped at least

for a more humane administration of the laws. And, in fact, Cleveland began to fill the Utah territorial positions with men committed to ease the long-prevailing tensions. More importantly, church emissaries succeeded in establishing an understanding with President Cleveland and some of his closest advisors, including Solicitor General George A. Jenks. In consultation with these party leaders, a sixth attempt at statehood was launched in 1887, which featured a constitutional clause prohibiting polygamy. The specific wording was drafted by Jenks, who also visited Utah in early July to oversee work behind the scenes.

Meanwhile, Mormon church leaders also approved of the strategy. They essentially agreed that it was better to have anti-polygamy laws enforced by their own elected officials than to have continued enforcement by unsympathetic outside appointees. Thereafter, church leaders quietly assembled key Mormon delegates to the constitutional convention and urged them to go along with the prohibitions against polygamy. George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency of the Church emphasized that they were engaged on "the most important political move since the church was organized." High church officials were equally emphatic that local Mormon leaders encourage voters to ratify the constitution when it was submitted for approval; and this ratification was accomplished by a large majority. If church interference in politics had been as much a concern to high Democratic leaders as some asserted, they certainly would not have continued cooperating and, in fact, encouraging such activity.

However, the statehood attempt ran into a Congress far less willing to cooperate with the Utah admission scheme unless Mormon leaders were willing to commit themselves more specifically against polygamy. Since church authorities refused such concessions at the time, this elaborate attempt at statehood met the same fate as its predecessors. Another casualty, in the long run, was the generally cordial relationship that had existed for many years between the Church and the Democrats.

Because of the widespread opposition to Mormonism and polygamy, church leaders recognized the need for public-relations work with the nation's press, the most



Statehood celebration decorations included a 158 by 75 foot flag draped in the Mormon Tabernacle, with the forty-fifth star illuminated, January 1896.

important opinion-molding institution of the day. Through an elaborate network of lobbyists, also engaged in protecting other interests, Mormon authorities authorized the expenditure of at least \$144,000 in 1887 to help persuade key newspapers not to print negative items and, if possible, to publish positive ones. A substantial number of papers across the nation altered their editorial treatment of the Church from what it had been at the beginning of the year.

Isaac Trumbo, a Californian with Latter-day Saint relatives, became the most important agent in the church lobbying effort, which gradually became closely connected with the Republican Party, then coming to power with the Benjamin Harrison administration. Trumbo was successful in enlisting some of the most influential of all Republicans in the cause of Utah statehood. James G. Blaine and James S. Clarkson represented a faction of the party which had recently become convinced that some of their more intolerant fellows had alienated the majority of voters in large areas through their stands against such practices as the use of alcoholic beverages, conducting school in non-English languages, and polygamy. These party leaders became committed to increased tolerance and cultural pluralism.

One of the developments pivotal in winning much Mormon gratitude and support, even though the Republican Party had formerly been a major opponent, was Blaine's intervention to block passage of the Cullom-Struble Bill, which would have denied the vote even to non-polygamous Mormons, simply because of their beliefs. Part of the negotiations that led to that measure's being tabled was an understanding that some change would soon be forthcoming on the Church's stand regarding plural marriage. The so-called Woodruff Manifesto was announced some months later. Among other things, this announcement placed responsibility for the continued

practice of polygamy on the individuals involved and maintained that the Church would not advocate new plural marriages in defiance of the laws of the land. The Church could no longer be regarded as standing in the way of Utah statehood.

After the issue of polygamy was addressed, the other major obstacle to Utah's admission was the bloc-voting tendencies of the Mormons. Friendly

political advisors from both major parties advised that Utah would not be given statehood until normalization of political allegiances was achieved. Such normalization took place with amazing rapidity in 1891. The Mormon People's Party was quietly disbanded, and church members were encouraged to join the recently organized Democrat and Republican parties in Utah. There was real effort expended to try to keep them about equal numerically, but the Republicans gained a slight advantage. This gave partisan advocate Clarkson his most persuasive argument to fellow party members in Congress, whose support was needed for Utah statehood. His overstated estimate was that the Mormon vote held the balance of power in perhaps eight or ten states. Promises of this potential, along with apparent promises to key individuals that Utah statehood would enhance railroad and other economic developments in the area, in which they were sure to be included, helped to garner the needed congressional support for Utah's admission into the Union as a state.

Statehood celebration, January 4, 1896

In the final struggles in Congress, it was the Democrats in the Senate Committee on Territories who appeared hesitant to grant the long-sought goal. Recent Utah territorial elections had gone against them, and with the national legislature so closely balanced, they were reluctant to grant two new Senate seats to the rival party. In the final compromise allowing the Utah enabling act, passed in July 1894, it was stipulated that Utah not be admitted until after the current congressional term. Thus statehood did not arrive until January 4, 1896, after a half-century of struggle. ▣

Source

Utah History Encyclopedia
<http://historytogo.utah.gov/statehood.html>

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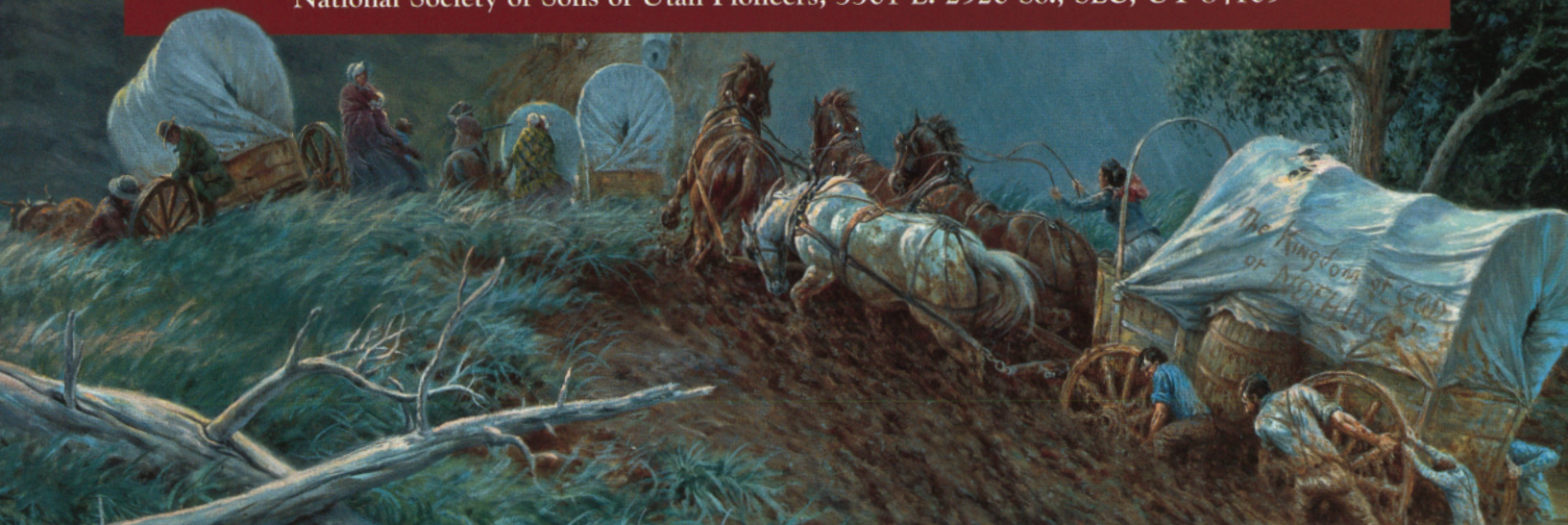
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